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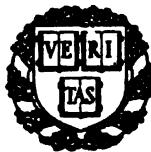
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A Chippendale Romance

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CHIPPENDALE BOOKCASE

CHIPPENDALE BOOKCASE

Break-front, with central compartment and wings. Glass doors with tracery "applied in carved bead mouldings in Gothic forms, combined with dripping-water effects. Light gallery framing two open diaper designs runs continuously across top, ~~above~~ where it is broken at the centre by an oval scroll," which is not contemporary. "A fret band separates the body of the case from ~~the~~ ^{the} cupboards below, which are enclosed by doors bearing in relief oblong panels with concave corners." [Page 17.]

This bookcase has been traced directly to the hand of Thomas Chippendale, and in line, proportion, ~~and~~ ^{charms of} design and exquisite detail, stands in the front rank of his creations.

Longman, Green, & Co.

36 Paternoster Row, London, E.C.4.

18, New Bond Street, W.1.

1891.

CHIPIEENDIVE BOOKCASE

ANSWER CASE

A
Chippendale
Romance

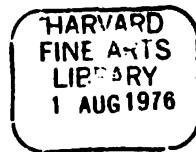
By
Eben Howard Gay

Illustrated

Longmans, Green, & Co.
Fourth Avenue & 30th Street, New York
London, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras

1915

John C. C. C. 173
Dec. 21, 1730
John C. C. C. 173



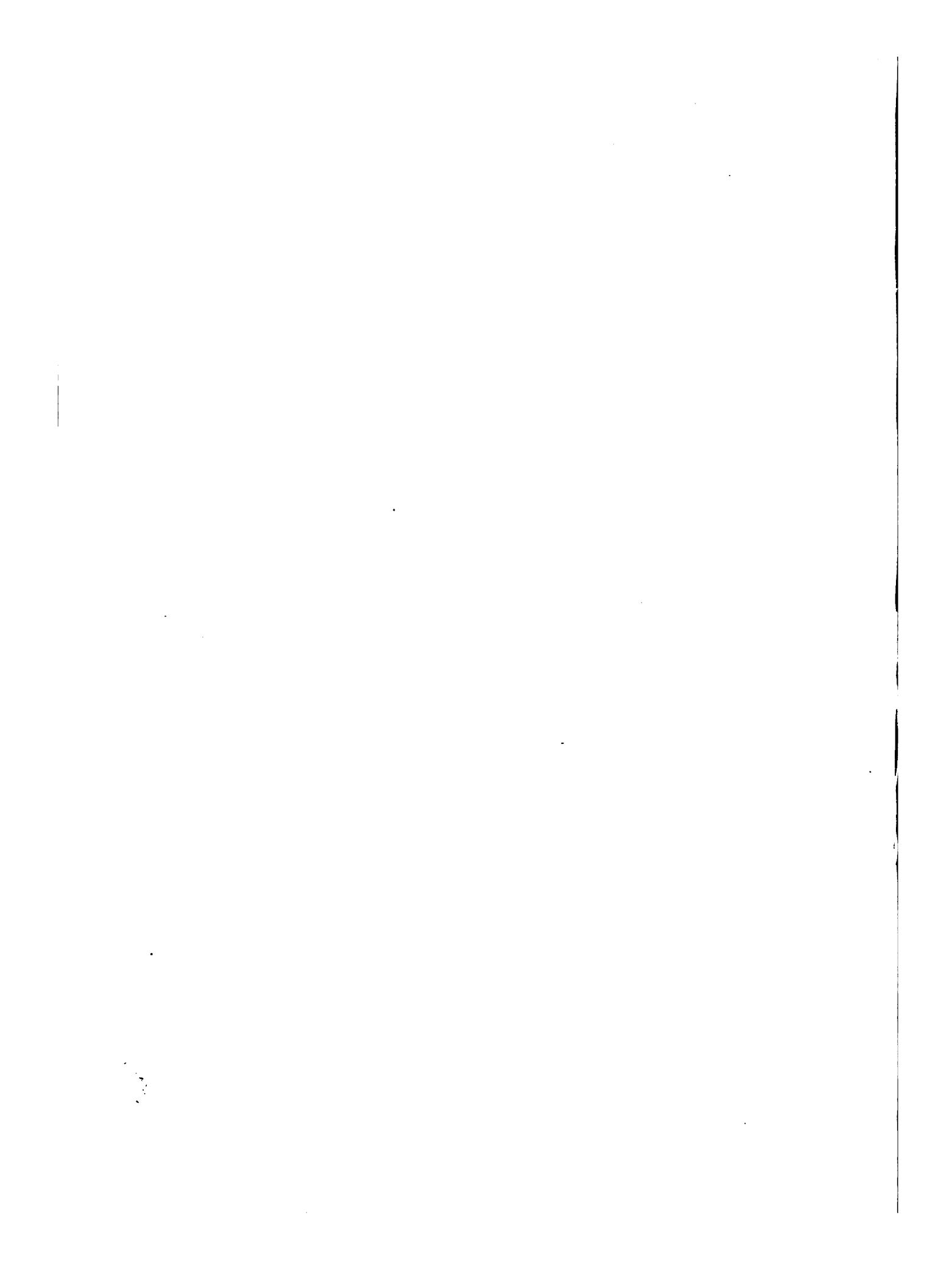
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To

A. B. G.



Foreword

A LOVE of the beautiful, as expressed in the purest forms of art that past centuries have evolved, a passion for collecting antique furniture, silver-plate and porcelains in the periods of their highest development, the æsthetic delight borne of surroundings of mellowed art-objects carrying with them the intangible but permeating atmosphere of by-gone years, the charm of living in their constant companionship,—these influences formed the mainspring that found expression in the Georgian House and its original furnishings here described.

In prefacing a work upon antiquities, Walpole wrote:

“From the antiquarian I expect greater thanks; he is more cheaply pleased than a common reader: the one demands to be diverted, at least instructed — the other requires only to be informed.”

These lines furnish an apt definition of the different classes of readers which two writers upon the same subject recognized to exist. Yet before the words quoted came to the notice of the present author, his plan of presenting his theme had found expression in the following text, which, to his knowledge, was the first time a story had been employed as the vehicle for conveying

FOREWORD

information upon antiquities, hitherto confined to formal treatises. The narrative form adopted in these pages, with such 'diversion' and 'instruction' as, haply, they may be found to contain, was accordingly fixed upon as best suited to impart to the general reader the author's experiences in the charmed world of the collector — while, at the same time, to meet the requirement of the antiquarian "to be informed," a technical analysis of the specimens illustrated was prepared for each plate.

Although the exigencies of the story have called for some play of fancy, conscientious efforts have not the less been made that all statements of fact should be trustworthy. The episodes recorded are actual experiences, while the collectors introduced are pen-portraits of antiquarians, both living and dead, whose favorite hobby of gathering curios has been their life-long pursuit.

The furniture portrayed, which is all in mahogany, was assembled by the author and formed the decoration of his house, views of whose exterior and interior are included among the illustrations. The book-case forming the frontispiece has been directly traced to Chippendale, wherein it differs from the great bulk of antique furniture, which, unlike English plate, bears no mark of its birth or maker. It is customary, therefore, to refer to specimens bearing the decorative motifs of which

FOREWORD

the original designer made habitual use, as being of "Chippendale style," "Hepplewhite style," etc., as the case may be.

If the writer be charged with holding a brief for Chippendale, he would not disclaim that he conceives this master-craftsman to have been the most artistic furniture-designer the world has yet produced.

Should these pages help to preserve memories of the house and its furnishings beyond the vicissitudes of time and fortune — should they arouse a deeper interest in the consummate art attained by England in the XVIII Century — and serve to differentiate the main features of the principal schools of furniture then extant — Chippendale, Hepplewhite, Sheraton and Colonial, that ancien régime of sustained beauty, now, alas! quite vanished — the author will be content.

E. H. G.

BOSTON, October, 1915

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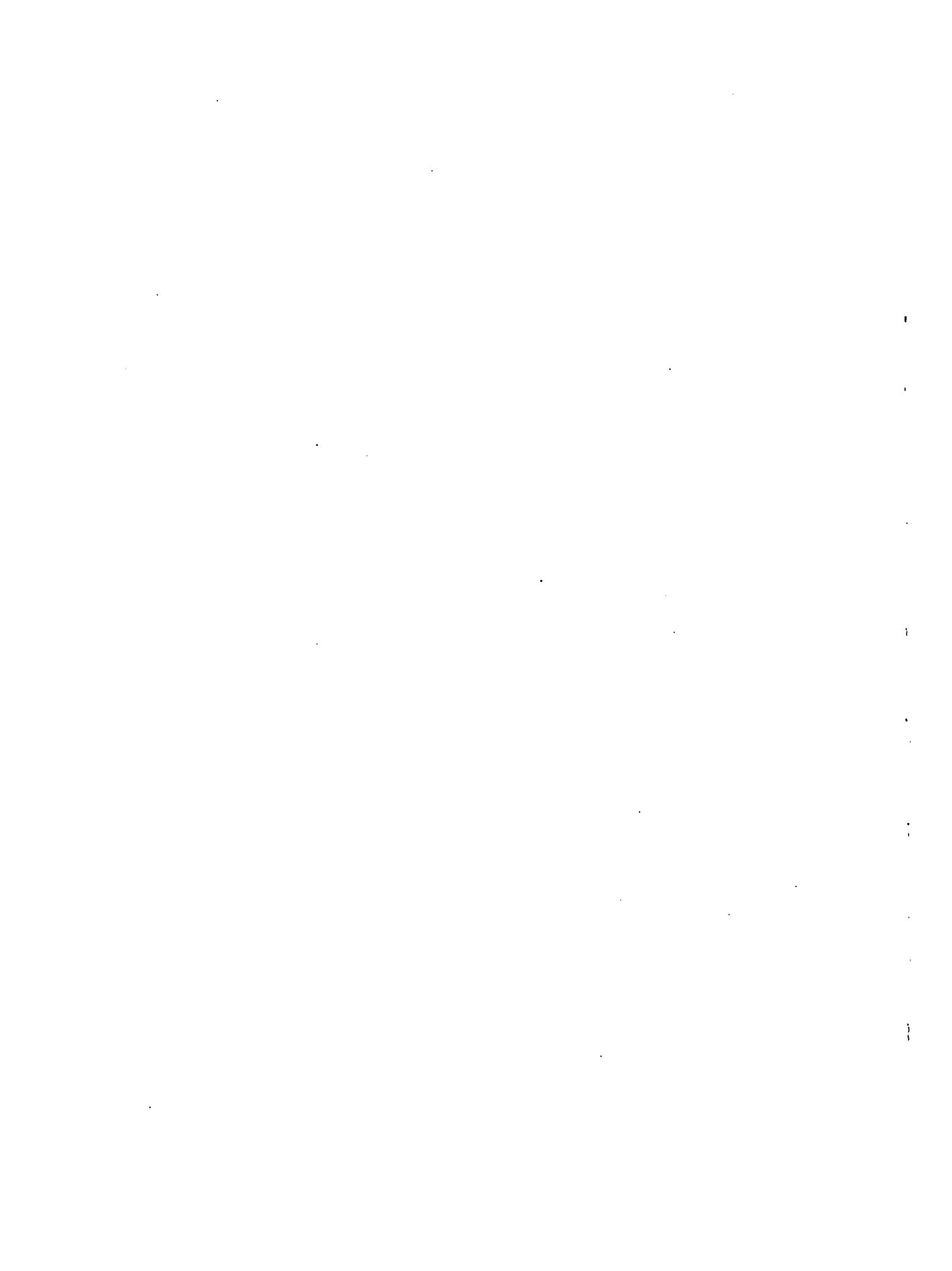
A
Chippendale
Romance

By
Eben Howard Gay

Illustrated

Longmans, Green, & Co.
Fourth Avenue & 30th Street, New York
London, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras

1915



A Chippendale Romance

I

THE original invoice, yellow with age, lay in an inner drawer of the cupboard beneath:

60 St. Martin's Lane, London, 1753

The Honourable Lionel Cholmondeley

to Thomas Chippendale

Cabinet Maker

DR.

For large break-front book-case of very fine mahogany with wings upon each side of a central compartment, doors with glass pannels and the whole compleatly finished in the most elegant taste £84-15s.

But it needed no credentials to establish the impress of the master in every detail of his handiwork — from the exquisite tracery of the glass doors, applied in carved bead mouldings in Gothic forms, combined with dripping-water effects, to the light gallery framing two open diaper designs, which ran continuously across the top, save where it was broken at the centre by an oval scroll which formed the cresting. A fret band separated

A CHIPPENDALE ROMANCE

the body of the case from the cupboards below, which were enclosed by doors bearing in relief oblong panels with concave corners.

This example of the finest traditions of English furniture had adorned for a century and a half the library of the Devonshire nobleman for whose ancestors it had been fashioned by the famous maker, until, by chance of fortune, it had finally reached the Fifth Avenue Galleries in New York, to be disposed of at auction with other specimens of antique cabinet-work of lesser importance.

I had visited the rooms each of the preceding exhibition days to worship at the shrine of this product of the Renaissance movement in England, of which Chippendale was the central figure, marveling how visitors could find eyes to admire anything else in the collection, and wandering off to affect an interest in neighboring specimens, when my obvious absorption in this particular exhibit became too apparent. For I had decided that my future happiness and peace of mind rested in owning the masterpiece—not at *any* price, my resources not permitting indefinite bidding, but at the liberal limit I had set for myself and at which I hoped to secure it.

The exciting moment arrived. The auctioneer extolled the merits of the book-case in sounding phrases,

A CHIPPENDALE ROMANCE

as those of his profession seem prone to do upon reaching the especial article which one has set his heart upon buying to advantage. Bids arose from all sections of the large company present, advancing the price in round sums to many times its original cost, yet still leaving a fair margin within my limit. I had followed my usual custom of allowing the competition to exhaust itself before entering the contest, and at length had the satisfaction of seeing the bids hesitate. The only really dangerous opposition now left, as I viewed it, arose from a young man at the rear of the room, whose decisive manner, keen eye, aquiline nose, black hair, and sallow complexion, suggested the thought that he might be representing other interests, rather than buying for his own use. My first bid was promptly advanced by a nod from this unwelcome stranger, my second and third met with the same fate, until it became evident that it was a racial contest to the death, with the limit I could afford to pay fast approaching. Now it was reached!—only to be still followed by that inexorable nod—mute, but eloquent to the quick eye of the auctioneer. I made a final offer, beyond the figure I had planned, and, to my overwhelming regret, saw the object of my admiration awarded on a still higher bid to my implacable rival!

A CHIPPENDALE ROMANCE

Only those who have experienced the satisfaction of owning an exclusive art-object, that may not be ordered by the half-dozen by any "malefactor of wealth," can appreciate the corollary of such possession — the sense of irretrievable loss felt by the collector who has missed the opportunity of acquiring an unique masterpiece, where experience shows that, with rare exceptions, that particular opportunity never occurs again. Such feelings of regret took possession of me as I returned disconsolate from the auction-rooms that late April afternoon, nursing my disappointment, and fully conscious that my gaze would never again rest upon another Chippendale bookcase to equal the one I mourned.

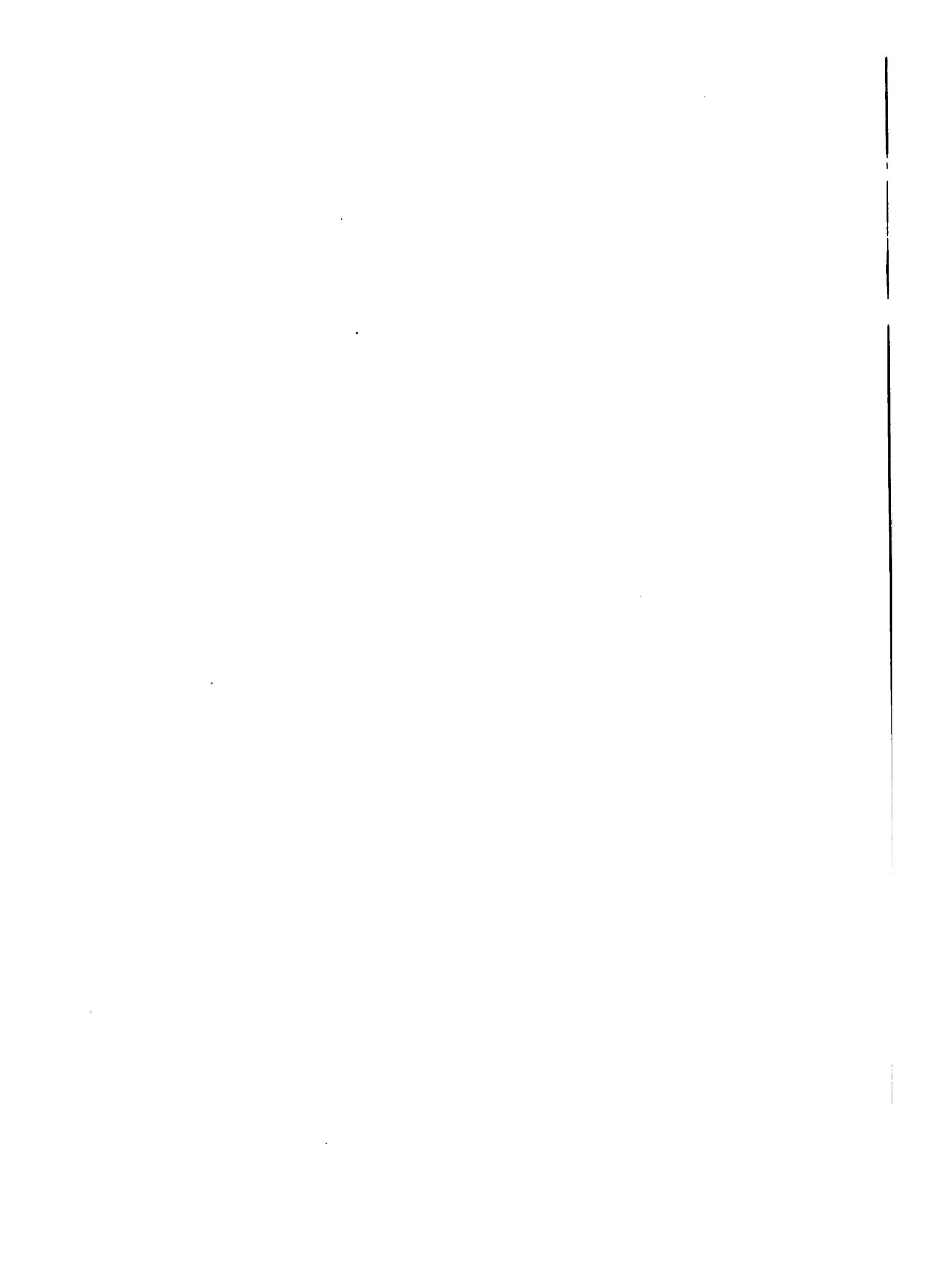
"Why should he have outbid me?" I asked myself impatiently. "If those Mexican oil-lands were only producing what the others adjoining them are doing, I should have been bidding against that man this minute, rather than allowing him to run off with a treasure that can never be replaced. I will telegraph at once to put on an extra drill and push the two that are already down 1,700 feet."

In addition to the comfortable fortune in sound securities which had been bequeathed to me, his only son, in trust, until I should reach my fast approaching ma-



UPHOLSTERED ARMCHAIR

Chippendale style. The seat-rail is in a curved projection with cabochons in centre and on knees of legs, which finish in volute feet. On front of arm uprights are other cabochons and acanthus. Appropriate silk-damask upholstery, which is not contemporary.



A CHIPPENDALE ROMANCE

jority, my father, Harold Blake, whose name I bear, had deeded these oil lands to me outright. They had stood on his books in a "Special Account," that the wealthiest and most conservative investor occasionally permits himself to indulge in as an outlet for the speculative instinct, which, in the last analysis, lies at the heart of all mankind. I had since entered into a contract with the powerful Royal Dutch-Shell Combine to exploit this land on a royalty basis, they agreeing to pay me the sum of \$400,000 forthwith, providing their drills should produce a well flowing at least 10,000 barrels a day, and in addition a bonus of 10 cents per barrel upon all oil produced on the property from that time forward.

Having despatched the telegram, bitter memories of the outcome of the auction-sale again asserted themselves. My regret was doubly keen for the reason that I had been specializing in the collection of Chippendale furniture, many of the choicest specimens that had reached America in recent years—some of them in Revolutionary days by way of Virginia and other Southern states—having come into my possession and been safely stored against the time when I should call them forth to live again. That day was still of the future, for,

A CHIPPENDALE ROMANCE

as my *Château en Espagne*, I had conceived the thought of erecting as an appropriate setting for this XVIII Century English furniture a *Georgian House in America*, whose ordered façade in fancy rose before me with the same beauty and dignity as though Sir Christopher Wren or Inigo Jones were here today to prepare its plans. And Fancy (the traitor!) had also painted that book-case as the central feature of the library furniture, if not of the whole collection!

I would tell my grievance to Rose Lee. She, as a collector, would understand; though how far she would sympathize I could scarce surmise, owing to the brief acquaintance that had been ours. We had met at occasional afternoon-teas, concerts, and auction-sales of old furniture, our interests at the latter never clashing, as she confined her collecting to the period of the Adam Brothers and the contemporary Hepplewhite and Sheraton designs of 1775 to 1800, without embarking in the Chippendale era just preceding. She had fortune, an assured station in life, and was undeniably handsome. Yet with all the social advantages of a tall figure, dark, lustrous hair, brilliant coloring, eyes that revealed greater depths beyond, and faultless taste in dress, she was so engrossed in her furniture-collecting and the study of



BREAKFAST TABLE

Chippendale style. Cabriole legs, bearing on knees mascarons of lions' heads holding ring in mouth, from which hang floral sprays. Feet, a lion's paw grasping ball.



ARMCHAIR .

Hepplewhite style. One of pair, with five side-chairs. Heart-shaped back of interlacing curves and festoons, with half flower at base. Arms in cyma curves, with rosettes where joined by uprights. Tapering legs. Modern upholstery.

A CHIPPENDALE ROMANCE

music, that all other interests in life were subordinated to these two absorbing pursuits.

The salon into which I was ushered — her favorite Adam room — contained the principal treasures which she had gathered about her. The characteristic features of this period of the later Georges were here blended into a harmonious whole — from the sweeping oval of the ceiling with its sub-divisions of smaller ovals and circles, to the inlaid marble fire-place flanked by ram's heads, supporting on its mantel a row of Wedgewood vases, across which white Roman vestals in fluttering draperies danced airily upon a field of pale green. An old spinet stood at the farther end of the room, its up-raised lid forming a decorative panel depicting a garden-scene with groups of frolicking cherubs engaged in a mimic battle of flowers. The serpentine curves and undulating red-brown surfaces of a neighboring sideboard suggested an old 'cello or bass viol, while a pair of half-round commodes in the Adam style relieved the dull-green panels of the room with their soft, yellow, satin-wood tones. Mirrors of the same era, supported by winged griffins, their gilt frames dulled by time, threw back reflections from the wall. Hepplewhite tables and chairs, the latter with shield and heart-shaped backs and

A CHIPPENDALE ROMANCE

square, fluted legs terminating in spade feet, and Sheraton chairs, sofas, and cabinets, with their straight vertical lines, added the final note in re-creating the atmosphere of the period. On every side the decorative use of urns, rams' heads, sheaves of wheat and oval medallions of conventionalized sun-flowers proclaimed that the Adam Brothers still reigned a century and a half later than their day.

From this old-world environment, Miss Lee, in soft, white, clinging chiffon, with a dash of apricot at her belt, came forward to greet me with a cordial smile of welcome.

"Delighted to see you, Mr. Blake. Have you been to any more *thés dansants* since the one at Sherry's the other afternoon?"

"No, Miss Lee; in fact, I am not very keen on that form of entertainment. Not that I did not enjoy our maxixe well enough, but the one-step, even when stripped of its coarseness, is still ungraceful, while the hesitation is a departure from the true waltz-form, whose novelty, to my mind, doesn't justify itself. Oh! for a good old Strauss waltz once more! Shall we ever hear one again?"

"Not while the present rage lasts," she answered.



MIRROR AND MANTEL

Adam style. Marble mirror, the frieze and pilasters inlaid, which decorative feature came into especial vogue about 1775. Urns are sculptured in relief on the upper pilasters and in central tablet. Contemporary steel basket-grate.

Mirror-frame in double concentric ovals, outlined in pearl-edge, and supported on winged griffins and open floral scrolls. The frame surmounted by an urn holding sprays of wheat and flanked by rams' heads, from which hang garlands of drapery.

Mirror, mantel and grate typical of the Adam style of decoration.

A CHIPPENDALE ROMANCE

“The world has gone dance-mad, and any one presumptuous enough to question the right of the modern dance to exist is at once consigned to outer social darkness! Yet, to be quite frank with you, I find my ear tiring of the endless cross-beat of the music, and longing for accent as well as beat to fall once more upon the first note of the measure. The great composers of the past who have used syncopation sparingly to give variety and piquancy to their rhythms would turn in their graves if they knew the abuse to which it has been put in the modern dance-music, which is so trashy as to sound the death-knell of the step which it accompanies, when the present craze has passed. Can you conceive of Deslibes, Saint-Saëns, Humperdinck, Boccherini, Johann Strauss, or any other master of the dance-form prostituting his art to the writing of music for a turkey- or fox-trot?”

“That would require a vivid imagination, I confess, yet I am quite of your mind that any one attempting to stem the tide of popularity of the dance of today would find himself much in the position of Mrs. Partington with her mop and treadle trying to keep back the Atlantic Ocean! How much more interesting to give one’s thoughts to things of permanent value with a perspective — objects of beauty, for instance, which have come

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down to us from another age with the soul of the artist who conceived them visible in every line. Take old furniture —”

“But,” Miss Lee hastily interrupted, a turn of her head outlining the oval contour of her cheek, “we need not look to the past for all things beautiful, and we don’t want to deceive ourselves into fancying that simply because a thing is old, it is for that reason alone superior. There is one field of art in which the achievements of today will, I think, compare favorably with any that have been made in the past,” — her glance lingered lovingly upon her spinet, — “and that is — music. The Renaissance and Palladio proved to be the high-water mark in Italian art and architecture, the Elizabethan Age in English literature and the XVIII Century in the same nation’s arts and crafts, the Sung dynasty in Chinese pottery, and the Ming in porcelains, the XVII Century in Japanese lacquers, and the same period in Persian textiles, while France, the stronghold of modern painting, has been in the throes of a recession in its art-wave for many years past. What a satisfaction, then, to feel that there are at least three modern musical composers whose works place them in the Temple of Fame side by side with the giants Beethoven, Bach, Brahms, Mozart, Händel,



HALL CHAIR

One of pair. The back is formed of a conventionalized shell with open-convolutions and terminates in volutes at junction with seat, which consists of a second concave shell. Flat legs in cyma curves. Central panel in back bears coat-of-arms of the extinct earldom of Rochford.

A CHIPPENDALE ROMANCE

Haydn and Wagner. I refer to Richard Strauss, César Franck and Edward MacDowell,— Strauss with his fertile invention, titanic grasp of musical ideas and mastery of orchestral color; Franck with soul attuned to celestial harmonies, and scaling the loftiest heights through the purity of his themes and the perfection of his form; and, finally, our own MacDowell (alas! that he should have been cut off in his prime), to whose sensitive ear and deep musical spirit, all Nature sang in divine melodies!"

"I believe your choice is well made, so far as we can now judge," I admitted, "yet I warn you that prophecies of the niche that will be accorded by future generations to the musical heroes of today are apt to prove false. But, Miss Lee,— my Georgian House that I told you about,— I have met with a serious set-back in its plans. I had counted on making an important addition to its library from the auction-sale of old English furniture at the Fifth Avenue Galleries a week ago. You weren't there—it was all Chippendale and wouldn't have interested you—"

"Pray do not impute to me an interest in the Adam period alone," my friend replied in lively protest, "even though my collecting has been confined to that school.

A CHIPPENDALE ROMANCE

All fine old furniture and antiquities appeal to me, and have I not even an advantage over you that I may still, if I choose, go into earlier periods, and yet be 'within the picture,' while you can never draw from any craftsman later than Chippendale without stepping outside?"

"Well, at all events," I replied, "I had discovered among the exhibits what would have completed my library,—a bookcase of the first order of design and workmanship, almost the exact counterpart of one in Chippendale's *Gentleman and Cabinet Maker's Director*."

"And what was its fate under the hammer?"

"Snatched from my grasp by a stranger who outbid me," I answered gloomily. "Thinking he might be buying to re-sell, I have since visited every old-furniture shop in Fourth and Fifth Avenues without avail, and finally sought light from the auctioneer, only to be informed that he was pledged not to disclose the name of the real buyer,—apparently a private collector."

"Isn't yours the common fate of all antiquarians," Miss Lee rejoined sympathetically, "where there is but one original and hundreds who desire it? If you had secured the bookcase, the disappointment you now feel would simply have been transferred to the one who



RECTANGULAR CENTRE TABLE

Chippendale style. The central decoration of the frieze consists of a whorl of acanthus leaves, with spirals from which extend sweeping sprays outlining the lower frame in graceful curves. Cabriole legs terminating in knobbed volute feet are similarly ornamented, while three mouldings in varying flower-designs extend around the table in steps beneath the top. Vases with bell-flowers are carved in strong relief near each corner.

A specimen of superior structural design, with decorative motives growing naturally therefrom.

A CHIPPENDALE ROMANCE

failed to do so. But, Mr. Blake, aren't you allowing the Chippendale cult to blind you to the merits of his immediate followers?—for to them belongs the credit of embodying *color* for the first time in English furniture, Hepplewhite employing marqueterie and Sheraton inlaying, while hand-painted decoration and rare and exotic woods also came into vogue at that time."

"Quite true," I responded, not unappreciative of my friend's kindly intent to divert my mind from a sore subject to the general discussion of one in which our interest was mutual, "but it is equally the case that Chippendale introduced *form*. Like the great composers, the ornamentation of whose symphonies sprang from their main themes, Chippendale's designs were first and always structurally sound, the carving and decoration growing naturally out of the form first created. The fact that the single medium of wood sufficed to produce his finest effects, while other schools depended for their enrichment upon the further use of tapestry, painting, brass, buhl and inlay, is but another proof of the perfection of his designs."

"And yet the Adam Brothers' school was created by way of protest against the extravagances that those designs had reached," Miss Lee insisted, "finding its chief

A CHIPPENDALE ROMANCE

inspiration in the Classic. Frankly, could anything be lovelier than the lines of that Grecian urn which forms the chief decoration of my mantel-mirror?"

Her glance rested confidently on this feature of the frame, satisfied that it would command my equal approval.

"They are certainly very beautiful," I agreed, admiring the chaste decoration; "but, except in rare instances, I cannot admit that Chippendale erred in being extravagant in his designs. This was simply the view of his successors, which not the less resulted in the formation of a new school of furniture. So with the later Victorian craftsmen, who did not approve of the vastly superior creations of the XVIII Century, and proceeded to treat their patrons to something new and different, by inflicting upon them their heavy and unwieldy designs. Yet this movement no more reflected upon the real merits of Hepplewhite and Sheraton than that of the last two did upon the earlier Chippendale achievements."

"Your view, then, Mr. Blake, is that these three succeeding schools marked the progress of the English art-wave of that era,—rising, falling, and ever evolving new forms, of whose merits we of a later day are in the best position to compare and judge dispassionately."



WINE COOLER

Plain body, the lower half formed of an encircling band of upright godroons, each decorated with a spray. The foot is splayed and rests on a square pedestal. The ovolو moulding forming the lip is ornamented with a rich scroll-and-flower design on a matted ground. From the melon-shaped finial at the top of the cover radiates a series of oval loops outlined by strap-work and surrounded by a border of alternate flowers and darts.

An original and convincing design, evincing talent of the first order on the part of the executant.

A CHIPPENDALE ROMANCE

“Exactly. Then Chippendale’s many-sided talents inevitably aroused jealousies, owing to his instant grasp of decorative ideas wherever existing. Drawing from the Classicism of ancient Greece and Italy down through the Renaissance, he levied tribute as well on China, Holland and France, from each of whom he borrowed apparently incongruous material as motifs for his designs, and welded them through the white heat of his genius into a harmonious whole. This was in part accomplished through his fine selective faculty—itself a mark of genius—which enabled him intuitively to reject such material as was unfitted to serve his artistic ends.”

“Then upon your own showing,” Miss Lee flashed back, “Chippendale was a plagiarist!”

“By no means,” I replied with equal warmth, “if we are to accept Lowell’s words:

*‘Though old the thought and oft expressit,
'Tis bis at last who says it best.’*

Originality must have elements to build upon that are of necessity already known, but must earn its claim to the title by so adapting those elements as to make them its very own. This is just what Chippendale did, for whatever the character of the detail, or the source from which

A CHIPPENDALE ROMANCE

he drew, he left the *impress of his mind* upon the result. Is it strange, then, that where other periods of furniture are known by the name of the sovereign under whose reign it was produced, this royal prerogative ceases in the case of Chippendale, whose name alone is employed when referring to his productions?"

"Ah, Mr. Blake, you are indeed a redoubtable champion of Chippendale! But pray tell me how your interest first came to be aroused in him, as well as in old furniture in general," Miss Lee added, her dark eyes dancing with curiosity.

"It happened in this way: I had gone to a neighboring city some years ago to attend my first auction sale of antiques. As I should view it today, the collection was made up of inferior Colonial and lumbering Victorian pieces in the vitiated taste that ushered in the XIX Century, but the odd shapes and unusual designs made such a strong appeal to my then untrained taste, that I had about decided to embark on the career of a collector that very afternoon by bidding off several of the tables and chairs."

"And, like other inexperienced collectors, I fear you bought them, only to cast them aside later when your taste developed," my friend rejoined with a furtive twinkle in her eye.



CARD TABLE

Chippendale style. One of rear legs unfolds, forming support for the lid, which here rests upon the table-body. The square formed when open is provided with four concave ovals for counters and circular spaces for candles at the corners. The frame is ornamented with two lozenges crossed by an X on either side of a central design in C curves. The cabriole legs end in shell feet resting upon balls and are decorated upon their knees with cabochons and acanthus. A rosette-and-ribbon band runs around the top.

A CHIPPENDALE ROMANCE

“No; I was spared that usual experience by a bit of good fortune. While awaiting the hour of the auction, I had wandered into a nearby cabinet-shop devoted to the restoring of old furniture, and after glancing over the sundry odd pieces in process of repair, my attention was drawn to the upper section of a secretary bookcase that held me entranced.”

“Was it Hepplewhite or Sheraton?” inquired Miss Lee, still loyal to her gods.

“Neither,—it belonged to the Chippendale period, and was a superb example of the master-designer in his favorite mahogany. Latticed glass doors in geometrical patterns enclosed the shelves, while the top was surmounted by a broken pediment, beneath which ran a dentil band and a design in relief fret-work, which bespoke the potency of the Chinese influence upon the cabinet-work of that day. Pressed for the name of the owner, the shop-keeper replied, ‘Why, it belongs to Remington, the collector, whose old furniture surpasses anything in the state; but you cannot hope to deal with him, for he is himself a buyer rather than a seller, and his prices are prohibitive.’”

“And even this did not deter you?” Miss Lee queried.

“No; the lure of that exquisite cabinet had taken

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full possession of me, and another half-hour found me within the portals of an old brick Colonial mansion, awaiting my host's arrival. One glance at the superb furnishings of the hall revealed for the first time to my delighted gaze the possibilities of artistic furniture, as conceived and executed by the representative cabinet-makers of the XVIII Century. All interest ceased in the auction of the afternoon, for from that moment I unconsciously adopted a standard of quality, by comparison with which, inferior specimens would no longer satisfy me."

"What did you see that so impressed you?" Miss Lee inquired with gathering interest.

"A collection of elaborately carved American Colonial furniture, inspired by the designs prevailing in England from 1735 to 1800, mingled with some fine examples of Chippendale. Here reposèd a shining array of mahogany cabinets holding rare collections of tortoise-shell and salt-glaze, high-boys and low-boys, corner-cupboards, chairs, sofas, consoles, tabourets, pie-crust-edge and tilt-top tripod tables, and mantel-mirrors supporting dainty garnitures of blue-and-white Chinese procelains. Cabriole legs, their knees embellished with acanthus leaves and terminating in claw-and-ball feet, formed the supports of



REMINGTON'S FRONT HALL



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nearly all the sofas, chairs and tables. Five-color K'ang-hi porcelain vases, antique Persian rugs, urn-crowned brass andirons, and two large Hobbemas, in the artist's best vein, lent the final touches of color to the rooms."

"And meantime what of Remington, the owner of all this splendor?"

"He finally appeared, a man of middle age and serious aspect, the ferret-like nose of the antiquarian, and a sonorous voice whose tones deepened into thrilling vibrations when discoursing upon his pet hobby. I have since heard vague rumors of a disappointed romance having come into his life, that left its shadow upon him, and perhaps caused the sombre mien that he habitually wore. There was gossip that he was in the habit of playing the races, and taking even longer chances in rooms devoted to the purpose; but whatever his private life may have been, his love of the beautiful was as sincere as his taste was refined and discriminating. I have wondered often since how he came to be possessed of this dual personality, and thought what an interesting study in heredity it would be to trace back these opposing traits to his ancestors, male or female, who originally gave them birth. This, however, was pure speculation, for when we were together, his

A CHIPPENDALE ROMANCE

whole heart and soul were so wrapt up in his collection, and his mind so absorbed in perfecting it, that our conversation rarely extended beyond our favorite topic."

"Certainly an interesting character," Miss Lee remarked, mentally absorbed in the study of the portrait I had drawn. "Did he give you any practical suggestions that you have since found of value?"

"You shall hear in his own words," I replied,—"And so you plan to become a collector," Remington began, after I had made known the object of my visit. "Then let me give you a bit of advice, Mr. Blake, drawn from my own experience: be prepared for two things, — your selfishness and honesty will both be enhanced by this pursuit. Your selfishness, because you will never see a fine piece of furniture in future, without wanting to possess it; your honesty, because love of the genuine will so dominate you that, far from knowingly purchasing a "fake," you will throw out of the window any piece of your own, concerning which you might come to have the slightest suspicion. An atmosphere of other days surrounds a genuine antique which does not exist in a reproduction, no matter how cleverly the modern artisan may try to imitate the creative lines of the original. The satisfaction of knowing that every one of



LIBRARY CHAIR

One of six. Chippendale style. "Key-hole pattern." Splat outlined by strap design in cyma and C curves framing an ingenious interlaced pattern, at once delicate and strong. Stiles faced with bead-and-reed mouldings. Cabriole legs, acanthus upon the knees, and claw-and-ball feet.

A CHIPPENDALE ROMANCE

his treasures is original far out-weighs any specious advantage the collector might have in claiming to his friends the authenticity of a specimen which he knows in his heart of hearts to be a sham. Poor as my sight is, it is sufficient for me to distinguish a reproduction as far off as I can see it, and to judge at the same time whether its claw-and-ball feet originally grew there.””

““Speaking of claw-and-ball feet,’ I rejoined, ‘I see that they abound in your collection, although in Chippendale’s *Director*, but few examples appear.’

““But many of the choicest specimens in the Chippendale school are not the less so equipped,’ he explained; ‘for Chippendale, as you know, had numerous followers, — Johnson, Manwaring, Lock, Ince and Mayhew among the others. And consider the antiquity of the claw and ball! Starting with the Oriental design of a dragon’s claw clasping a pearl, it has come down the remote ages from some ancient Chinese dynasty, until England adopted it from Holland in its present form. It carries a long way a piece which would otherwise be only mediocre.’

““I notice too, Mr. Remington, a glossy polish in the finish of all your specimens, not excepting the frames of your mirrors, which one would hardly expect to find upon furniture undoubtedly old.””

A CHIPPENDALE ROMANCE

“‘That is the work of my restorer, whom I instruct first to make all necessary repairs, then to scrape away from the surface of the wood every vestige of the “tooth of time,” and lastly to shellac and rub down with pumice-stone and oil. The “egg-shell” finish resulting is the nearest we can conceive to being the condition in which the pieces originally came from the hands of the maker,— and how could we hope to improve on that?’

“‘Now a last word upon your forthcoming collection,’ Remington resumed. ‘Remember, the supply of fine old furniture is constantly diminishing, and, conversely, the number of wealthy purchasers as constantly increasing. Pass by all the second and third-rate articles, for there will always be enough and to spare of them; but when you come across a *really fine* piece, buy it of the owner at any price, for even though you may think he is cheating you, *you are cheating him!*’”

“Here endeth the first lesson in furniture collecting, Miss Lee,” I concluded with mock solemnity; “and this was how I was spared the all too frequent experience of starting wrong.”

“You certainly owe him a debt of gratitude,” my hostess responded, “and his advice seems in general sound. But have you followed all his precepts?”



DUMB-WAITER

Chippendale style. Construction similar to regular tripod table, with the exception of its being built in tiers. A running vine with blossoms entwines the column, which springs from the junction of three cabriole legs carved with acanthus and ending in volute feet. The edge of tiers is raised, and ornamented with the same pattern of running vine. Each tier revolves around the central column, the better to serve its original purpose of being laden with dainties for the table and placed before each guest for his choice.



STOOL

Chippendale style. Cabriole legs richly carved with acanthus and finishing in Dutch angular feet resting on shells. An acanthus spray joins leg to seat-rail, the lower edge of which is ornamented with a shell border. Original red-damask upholstery.

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“In nearly every way his views have exerted a strong influence over my own, especially in the matter of claw-and-ball feet. Indeed, so ardent has been my pursuit of this decorative feature that Parker rallied me at the club the other day by declaring I would never marry, unless I found a girl with a claw-and-ball foot!”

The color rose to Miss Lee’s cheeks, while her glance fell to the point of her dainty slipper, as she made quick reply:—

“I fear I can never agree with him in his ideas upon finishing antique furniture, which, from what you tell me, I believe he *over-restores*. He must have fallen under the malign influence of a writer I have just been reading, who, in pointing out the way to treat old furniture wrecks, cheerfully recommends that they be

*‘Given a polish of so brilliant a hue
As to make them look newer than when they were new!’”*

The humor of her glance gave place to a graver expression as she continued: “Seriously, why remove all marks of age and wear from a curio that is in reality old, and should not therefore look otherwise? The result can only be a hybrid *new-old* appearance, that is neither one thing nor the other. Would he rub the

A CHIPPENDALE ROMANCE

verdigris off an antique bronze?" Miss Lee inquired with flashing eyes, secure in the position she held. "When he orders the surface of his old furniture scraped, he is sacrificing its most precious quality,—the patina that only time and abrasion can produce,—and I would not entrust one of my pieces to such treatment." Her glance rested serenely upon the surrounding time-mellowed antiques, all undisturbed by modern 'restorations.'

"I quite agree with you," I answered, "for I soon realized that the novelty of seeing a moldering specimen emerge transformed from the restorer's hands, with shining surfaces and fresh, new tone, in nowise equaled the lasting satisfaction of viewing it as it had come down from our forefathers with all the ear-marks of time and use undisturbed. So I have been gradually drawing away from Remington's theory, until now I buy only 'in the rough' and practically limit my restoring to the supplying of actually missing parts."

"Remington next came into my life some years later in an unexpected way," I continued. "I was strolling up Fifth Avenue at the time, when I chanced to see standing by itself in the window of an auction-room an antique mahogany low-boy with cabriole legs, the knees of which were richly carved with acanthus, and



SIDEBOARD TABLE

One of pair. Early Chippendale style. The lower frame is in a curved projection, outlined below in graceful curves following the outlines of sprays of flowers and acanthus. A pendant shell forms the central decoration, while other shells are applied to the knees of the cabriole legs, which end in animal's feet.

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finished in claw-and-ball feet. Its corners were embellished with fluted quarter-columns, its central drawer with a concave shell and streamers, while a conventionalized shell-pattern ran gracefully around its skirt."

"It surely was a *trouvaillé*," Miss Lee exclaimed, "providing you were satisfied it was a genuine antique."

"That question I at once set about solving by stepping into the window to make an examination by the full light of day. I can see now the smiles of the passers-by as they watched my movements,—removing the drawers, studying the age of the unpolished surfaces, peering into the joints, until —"

"You could hardly blame them where you were placing yourself on exhibition, as well as the low-boy! But you were quite justified,—I am inclined to think I should have done the same thing myself!—Do go on—" smiled Miss Lee.

"Well, it proved to be a real 'old timer,' battered by age, but conceived and built on honor; so I decided to return and bid it off that very afternoon. Happening on Remington a few blocks away, he at once launched into the risks a collector ran in being saddled with a 'dummy.'"

"'Why, only this morning,' he went on, 'I saw the

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cleverest kind of fake in the form of a low-boy which had been filled full of bird-shot and resort had to other devious devices to give it the semblance of age. Did you chance to run across it?"

"I replied that I thought I had, and it might prove interesting to see what would become of it that afternoon at the auction; whereupon Remington, finding the cat was out of the bag, consented to join me."

"As we took our seats within easy view of the auctioneer, I noticed among the gathering a number of familiar faces of furniture collectors I had met in widely different parts of the country, but none of whom evinced much interest in the old junk which made up the bulk of the offerings, and for which the bids dragged along in desultory fashion. Just before the low-boy was reached, one of these collectors, Chalmers by name, approached and bade us 'goodbye,' 'as there seemed to be nothing especial of interest and he must catch an out-going train.'"

"The fateful moment at length arrived, when the knight of the hammer announced: 'Now, gentlemen, we come to a time-honored relic of other days—a genuine antique—and what is your value?' Instantly the air was electric. Bids followed each other in rapid succession

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and at ever increasing figures. Looking about for the source of this keen competition, I discovered an active bidder in the rear of the room in no less a person than Chalmers himself, who had returned after apparently losing his train, and found something to interest him after all! Of one thing I was satisfied,—if any confirmation of my own belief were needed,—that in the light of this active bidding from leading connoisseurs, the antiquity of the low-boy was no longer at issue; and yet Remington and I gave no sign to the auctioneer."

"Was that because your friend was really suspicious of it?"

"Far from it, for I afterwards learned that he had placed his limit with a bidder who was acting for him in another part of the room."

"Then why were you silent, with your confidence in the genuineness of the piece unimpaired?" Miss Lee inquired, her curiosity now thoroughly aroused.

"Because I was following my plan of waiting for the psychological moment when the competition should exhaust itself, which, unlike my late experience, at length actually arrived. I then offered a small advance and the low-boy was knocked off to me on my single bid."

"Bravo! Mr. Blake," my friend rejoined with en-

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thusiasm, "you were rightfully entitled to the prize for having had the courage of your convictions, and I congratulate you on never swerving from your purpose under trying circumstances."

"Thanks, Miss Lee! The incident taught me that the 'enhancement in honesty,' which Remington had assured me would result from becoming a collector, was, with him, at least, chiefly concerned in being *honest with himself* in scorning reproductions in his own collection. It also furnished an illustration of the soundness of his original statement (although I did not dream I should so soon be crossing swords with him and Chalmers on this very point) that 'no real collector can see a fine piece of furniture without wanting to possess it.'"

"That is indeed true." Miss Lee answered with conviction, as we shook hands and parted.

My visits to the New York antiquity shops were not wholly fruitless, if they did fail to locate the book-case, as one large importer had informed me that he was just in receipt of a cable from his London branch that they were shipping that day an extremely fine Chippendale china-cabinet, upon which I immediately took the refusal. An entire building on Fifth Avenue was devoted to the



MANTEL CLOCK

Chippendale style. Marble base, with brass railing in open fret design, from which rise four decorated columns supporting clock. Pagoda roof with Mandarin seated beneath umbrella and with miniature bells hanging from every available support.

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requirements of this importing-house, one floor being confined to oil-paintings, another to Chinese procelains, still another to English furniture, a fourth to French, while the ground-floor was variously decorated according to the ever-changing stock of antiques in hand. This morning I made my way through an imposing array of old masters, suits of ancient armor, rich brocades, stuffs and embroideries, tall vases decorated with the consummate art of the Celestial, Gobelin tapestries, Italian marble statuary from the chisels of the inspired sculptors of the Renaissance, reliquaries of rock-crystal studded with gold and precious stones, tracing their ancestry to some remote church or convent, together with a host of other objets d'art, bibelots and bric-à-brac.

But these fleeting impressions were forgotten when I reached the English room and stood enraptured before the real object of my visit. I recognized the piece at once as being almost identical with one in the *Director*—a cabinet so charged with Chinese feeling that it might almost have been fashioned by an Oriental, had not contour and detail been so ingeniously adapted by its master-designer to harmonize with the mid-XVIII Century English school, as to place it at once among the first productions of Chippendale's genius. Its body was made

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up of three compartments, the middle one higher and broader than the wings, and surmounted by a ribbed pagoda roof in sweeping curves, beneath which ran an open fret design. From the topmost scrolls, as well as from the upper corners of the wings, hung miniature bells. The chief feature of the tracery forming the glass panels of the doors consisted of a large upright oval of bell-flowers, in conjunction with smaller geometrical forms. The lower section was ornamented with a broad fret band carved from the solid wood, which ran across the entire front beneath the doors. Flat legs formed the supports, their faces carved with pendants of flowers in sunken panels, and finishing in double scrolls. Several panes of the original glass were still intact,—readily distinguishable by the cross-veining characteristic of the cruder processes of the glass-makers of that day.

In spite of my efforts to repress the enthusiasm that I inwardly felt for the antique, realizing how costly such betrayals are when made under the eye of an alert dealer, I found it was held at a considerable sum,—quite beyond what I could in reality afford. A somewhat lower offer from me failed to move the heart of the owner, who exclaimed:

“This cabinet is absolutely unique; in all my experi-



CHINA CABINET

Chippendale style. Body in three compartments, "the middle one higher and broader than the wings, and surmounted by a ribbed pagoda roof in sweeping curves, beneath which runs an open fret design. From the topmost scrolls, as well as from the upper corners of the wings, hang miniature bells. The chief feature of the tracery forming the glass panels of the doors consists of a large upright oval of bell-flowers in conjunction with smaller geometrical forms. The lower section is ornamented with a broad fret band carved from the solid wood, which runs across the entire front beneath the doors. Flat legs form the supports, their faces carved with pendants of flowers in sunken panels, and finishing in double scrolls." [Page 74.]

In quite the same high class as the book-case forming the frontispiece, this china-cabinet, which could only have sprung from Chippendale's genius, represents the consummation of skill in adapting the Chinese influence to the English furniture of the XVIII Century. Outline, proportion and beauty of design here reach the height of artistic creation and render this cabinet unique among furniture productions.

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ence, I have never seen one like it outside of Chippendale's book, and never expect to again! I will take your offer under consideration, Mr. Blake, but the option I gave you ceases from today, as I cannot afford to tie my hands further."

So the matter rested until the ensuing morning, when, still hoping to close the purchase, I presented myself at the store. As I entered, an individual of dark coloring passed by, whose face struck me as being somewhat familiar, to which fact I gave no particular thought at the time. The dealer greeted me —

"Good morning, Mr. Blake, — sorry to disappoint you, but the china-cabinet was sold at my full price only five minutes ago."

"Impossible," I cried, stung with regret, — "who bought it?"

"The man you just passed at the door."

"Who is he?" I interrogated.

"I am not permitted to disclose his name, or that of the person for whom he is in reality buying."

The whole truth flashed upon me — my rival of the auction-room — my Nemesis and arch-enemy! I bent my steps homeward, keenly repenting that I had not paid the asking-price the previous day, and

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assured my possession of the treasure before it was too late.

Whether Fate held that I was sufficiently disciplined by this second defeat, and now entitled to some compensating favor from her, I know not, but there lay on the desk upon my return a paper which was destined to change my whole outlook upon life. It was a day-letter telegram from Mexico, in answer to mine of a few days ago:—

Panuco, Vera Cruz, Mexico

Harold Blake — New York

Telegram received. Number 2 came in at 3.30 P. M. Depth 1806 ft. Ran wild for 12 hours, the heavy pressure throwing 2-ton drilling-tools out of the hole and breaking valve and connections with accompanying loss of 25,000 barrels. Put on our men in 10 minute relays, employing diving-suits to enable them to work in the oil up to their necks and wind-fans to blow off the noxious gases. High pressure fittings now in place, clamped by 2 inch steel bolts to four heavy pieces of timber cribbed at depth of 8 ft. below surface and anchored down by 100 tons solid concrete. Well in control and producing at rate of 125,000 bbls. per day based upon measurements of flow for 3 hours. Shipping oil by every available barge. Remitting certified



SMALL CHINA CABINET

Chippendale style. The body is of glass with mouldings in geometrical designs, and is separated from the stand by a concave shell border. Below are drawers and shelves with bead moulding, which serve the double purpose of bracing the legs and affording additional space for china display. A fluted pagoda roof, whose four corners extend in delicate volutes, rises in graceful curves to support a finial with dripping-water effects, which is not contemporary.

A "Chinese Chippendale" specimen of rare charm.

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check \$400,000 to be followed by monthly payments figured upon daily flow as per agreement.

COMPAÑIA DE PETROLEO LA CORONA

What possibilities lay within these magic lines, unfolding to the imagination ever widening vistas! With boundless wealth, and the power that goes hand-in-hand therewith, the world was mine to command! No more haggling over the price of masterpieces, and losing them in the process,—instead, the luxury of following Remington's advice to "buy even though you think you are being cheated," safely trusting to the inexorable law of supply and demand to justify the purchase many fold in the fullness of time.

Here at last was the opportunity to complete my Georgian house 'to the Queen's taste,' with everything pertaining to modernity banished, and nothing permitted to cross its sacred portals save original furnishings of the period! If American markets could not supply these essentials, what more likely field than England, the home from which they sprang? I would sail immediately after that check reached me (ah! if it had only come a fortnight earlier!) and scour all Europe, if necessary, to fulfil my cherished dream.

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Rose Lee certainly was beautiful, even if cold; engrossed in her music and collecting, with no thought beyond. How vigorously she challenged my Chippendale tenets and sprang to the defence of Hepplewhite and Sheraton! After all, though, that was a healthy clash of mind against mind, and better than calm acquiescence in the opposing view. Then, beneath the surface, she seemed interested in my scheme of a Georgian house, and was kind-hearted in trying to divert my mind from the disappointment of losing the book-case. Yes, I would make her a farewell visit before sailing, if only for a few moments.

"Miss Lee," said I, on entering her salon, "history has been making since we last met."

"And favored you at the same time, I hope," she smiled back, motioning me to a seat opposite her.

"Yes and no," I replied, "I am struggling between joy and sorrow, for I have just missed another opportunity of securing a superb Chippendale china-cabinet, which would have occupied the same post of honor in the drawing-room of my Georgian house that the book-case would have done in the library,— and the same mysterious buyer checkmated me a second time. Almost in the same breath, I learn that oil

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has been struck on my Mexican lands, where one of the largest 'gushers' in the world is pouring forth its wealth of petroleum,—a willing servant by night and day."

"My heartiest congratulations, Mr. Blake,—like the brook, may it 'flow on forever'; but be prepared,—in case it should ever run dry."

"In what way?" I queried, wondering what possible menace could disturb the mind of my hostess.

"I mean that with this sudden influx of newly-acquired wealth, you would not be human if your scale of living did not also expand. We both know how much your beautiful Georgian house will demand from the outset, while lavish entertaining, with so ideal a setting, will as surely follow. Now suppose (which Heaven forbid!) that a reversal in your fortunes should later occur, that would compel you to part with all you had been a life-time in upbuilding,—do you believe that your circle of friends who had so gladly accepted your hospitalities in prosperous days would still stand by you?"

"Pray, why not?" I answered, my pride wounded at the thought that I might be sought only for the favors I could grant. "I would be the same man, and con-

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tinue to have the same personal qualities that had met with approval, while family and cultivation, at least to the extent that I may fairly claim them, would still be mine."

"And would still be recognized by the less worldly who look beyond the surface to the man beneath, but not by the rank and file. Say what you may, modern fashionable society is founded upon an aristocracy of wealth, to which birth, culture and personal charm are subordinate. It is *le monde où l'on s'amuse*, where each member looks for entertainment from the other, failing which *quid pro quo*, the delinquent is no longer sought, and the warmer friendships of earlier days grow cold, or lapse altogether."

"Aren't you rather cynical this afternoon, Miss Lee?" I ventured. "The sole qualification for entrance to Brook Farm and the Concord School of Philosophy was high thinking. Then there is that Boston club, whose members are chosen neither from the standpoint of wealth, birth, nor position, but because of their talents, goodfellowship, and having made some definite achievement in the world. With such a côterie of choice spirits, made up of artists, sculptors, musicians, authors, and raconteurs, is it any wonder that every distinguished

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visitor to that city is proud to be their honored guest?"

"These are but exceptions proving the rule," Miss Lee replied, standing loyally by her colors. "The social fabric is made up of many smaller units whose members are drawn together by their own sympathies and ambitions; but, after all is said, wealth, or the fine houses and furnishings, motors and the things that wealth will buy, too often form the sole standard of judging worth. Therefore, a man parts with these social assets at his peril, and in losing his fortune commits a sin which society will not forgive."

"Unless he recovers it —"

"Which is an admission," Miss Lee returned, "that in the meantime he must continue outside the sacred pale."

"Well," I answered, her keen insight into worldly affairs carrying me by storm, "if misfortune should arise, it would at least prove what stuff there is in me! Who knows but that I might still pursue the tenor of my way with the iron in my soul, but a smile on my face, gripping life with renewed zeal, and, whatever measure of success or failure might follow, compelling the respect of every one for a fight well fought!"

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Her eyes were alight with sympathy, then, —

“I sincerely believe you would adapt yourself to whatever might arise, Mr. Blake, but in our chat upon wealth and station, we have neither of us spoken of that great leveller of all ranks, — love; the favored theme of romance and poetry since time began, which, when justly born and rightfully bestowed, is deathless — which recks not whether its object be well or ill endowed with this world’s goods, or of high or lowly birth, which —” the color surged to her temples and her eyes glowed with deep feeling, as I replied:

“A beautiful sentiment, I agree, and one that may come to us all at some time, I suppose; but in the heyday of youth, with life all before us, I, for one, prefer a few more years of freedom and the fascinating sport of collecting antiquities!”

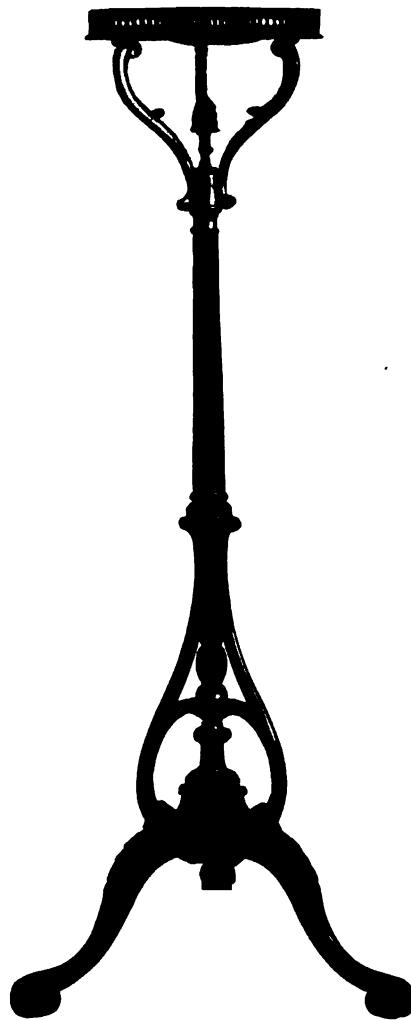
This thought aroused disquieting memories of my double loss, which not even the good news from Mexico could palliate. I resumed:

“I am not sure that the satisfaction of coming into affluence is not after all offset by my disappointment in losing both bookcase and cabinet; mere wealth can be replaced, but those antiques, I fear, never! Why must there always be a fly in the ointment?”



HUNT CHAIR

Late Chippendale style. Back framed by a broad carved band with ribbed face. At the top, scrolls and C curves, through which runs a ribbon forming the cresting. Arms finish in hounds' heads, with cyma curve uprights, which are carved on face. Legs ornamented with lion's head, foot and ball. Upholstered in modern leather.



GUERIDON

One of four. Chippendale style. Tall reeded column with curved supports, which spring from tripod base formed of cabriole legs with scroll feet. The cyma curve scrolls above bear a small shaped platform with gallery of open fret design.

Formerly used as a support for candelabra.

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“Don’t lose heart, Mr. Blake. It’s all in the chase, — somewhere and somehow we may find the equal, if not the superior, of the treasure we seek. This is the incentive which draws us collectors on, and adds zest to our search.”

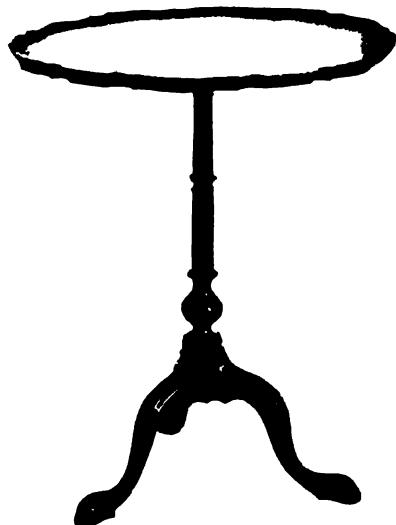
“Well, mine is going to be continued overseas; for I have arranged to sail for England the coming Saturday for a two months’ absence, in the hope of replacing the pieces I have lost, and to complete the furnishing of my Georgian house.”

Her glance fell before mine, and — was it fancy? — the crimson seemed for the moment to leave her cheeks, only to return as quickly with its accustomed brilliancy.

“Success to you, Mr. Blake! There you will be on the ground, and in the right place to take advantage of every opportunity. I hope, though, that you won’t wait until you return to tell me of your progress.” She bent forward to fasten in her belt a bunch of jonquils from a mass of the blossoms that raised their golden heads from a Sheraton table near by. “Should you care to write, you may count on my interest in all your experiences, and I shall welcome news of every important ‘find’ you make.”

A CHIPPENDALE ROMANCE

"You shall hear from me before my return," I rejoined, "although I shall of course be too closely occupied in my researches during the first month or six weeks, to leave any time for correspondence. Au revoir! Miss Lee, — luck with your collection!"



PIE CRUST TOP TABLE

Chippendale style. The edge of the top raised and broken into cyma and simple curves. Cabriole legs and feet ornamented with relief fret carved from the wood.



EXTERIOR OF GEORGIAN HOUSE
Ogden Codman, Jr., Architect



FRONT HALL

Marble floor, groined ceiling. Winding stair-case with wrought-iron balustrading at rear. Mirrors in Chippendale style on left.

LIBRARY
Second view. Side parallel to hall, with Chippendale bookcase in centre and small pie-crust-top tea-table at left.



LIBRARY

Second view. Side parallel to hall, with Chippendale bookcase in centre and small pie-crust-top tea-table at left.





MUSIC SALON

First view. Looking into library. Georgian statuary marble mantel on left, upon which rest Chippendale mirror [Page 149] and clock [Page 70]. In centre, triple chair settee [Page 140] and tea table with George II silver tea-service. Directly above, mirror [Page 149] and at right centre, tapestry chair [Page 134].



MUSIC SALON

Second view, opposite side of room. Cabinet, Chippendale style, in centre. Chairs [Page 128]. Lowboy beneath mirror at left [Page 68].



MUSIC SALON

Third view. Dining room on left — conservatory on right. Card-table in centre [Page 46].
Secretary-bookcase on extreme right.





MUSIC SALON

Fourth view. Five-color K'ang-hi vase resting upon Georgian carved wood bracket. Card-table beneath.



Detail of plaster modeling in ceiling of Music salon.



Detail of ceiling in Dining room.



DINING ROOM

First view. China cabinet, late Chippendale style, at left centre. Circular dining-table below, early XIX Century.



DINING ROOM

Second view. Conservatory through sliding-doors. Old red-damask lambrequins draped in English pattern of XVIII Century. Dumb-waiter at left. Around room, complete set of twelve dining-chairs with claw-and-ball feet, in Chippendale style.



DINING ROOM

Third view. Opposite side. Georgian statuary marble mantel with mirror in Chippendale style, before which stands contemporary English cut-glass candelabra. Sideboard tables at right and left [Page 64], used prior to introduction of the now familiar sideboard, which was a product of the later Hepplewhite and Sheraton régimes. On left, Carleton frame and pierced silver cake-basket — on right, tankard and candlestick — all George II plate.



ADAM ROOM

At centre, mirror, Adam style. Inlaid marble mantel and Adam basket-grate [Page 30]. Chairs, Hepplewhite style [Page 24]. At right, sideboard, Hepplewhite style, with knife-urns.



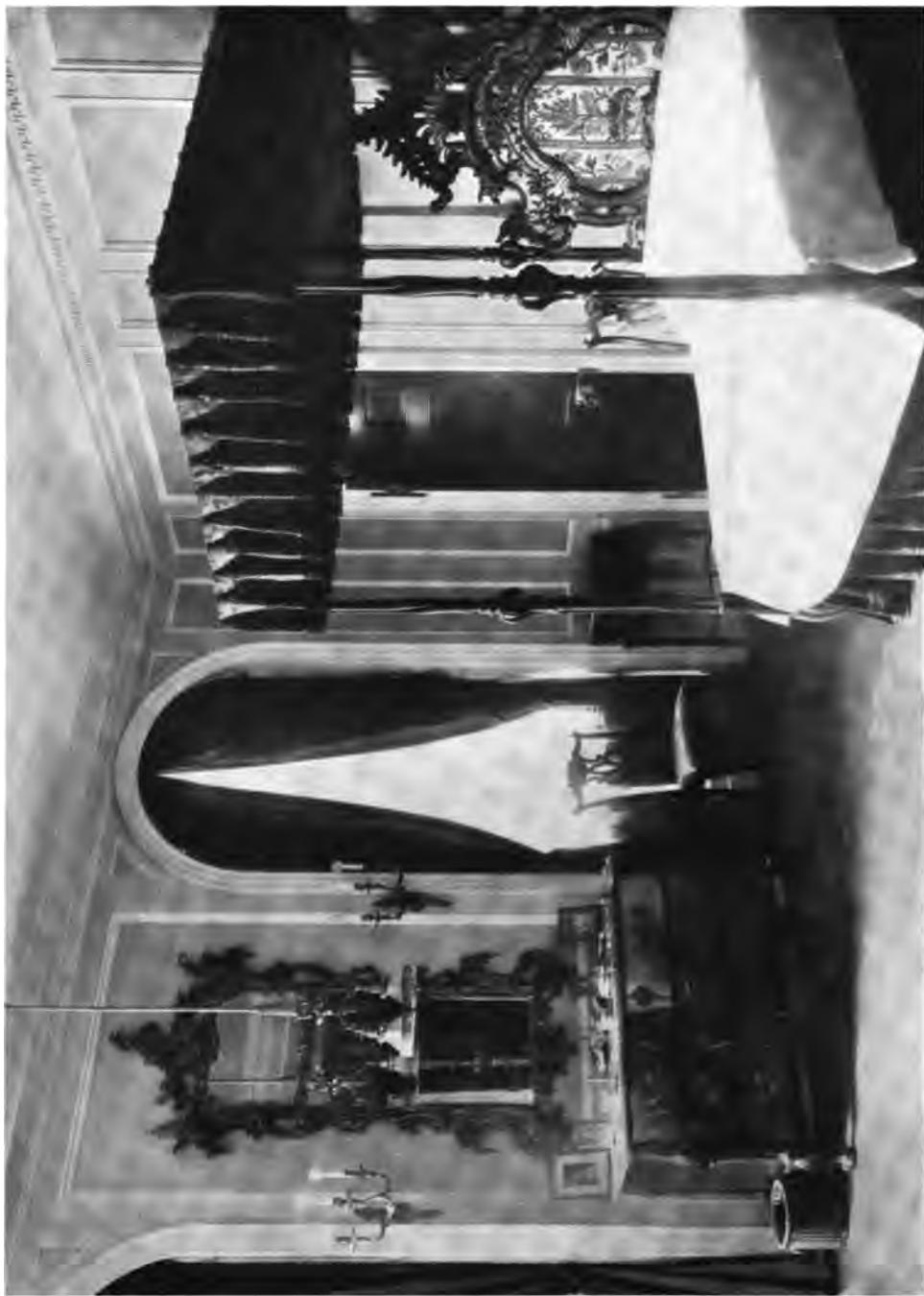
ADAM ROOM

Second view. Door with inlaid panels and brass fittings, showing strong Grecian influence of the period. Not contemporary.



ADAM ROOM

Third view. Detail of panel in foregoing, with handpainted central medallion and wood inlay of Grecian design.



BED ROOM

Mirror and commode at left, both in Chippendale style. Rosewood four-post bedstead of Spanish origin on right, the head-board carved in an elaborate shell design of striking originality.

II

NOT many blocks from Leicester Square, in a quiet shaded court, with terraced gardens lending color and fragrance to the air, stands the stone mansion of Yorke, the famous London collectionneur. Its spacious rooms are filled with rare English XVIII Century furniture and silver, china, porcelain, and works of art, producing an effect so complete that, when I first entered, it seemed almost unfair to my host's ménage to suggest the purchase and removal of any portion of his household gods, had I not been previously informed that not only would no offence be taken, but that nearly everything in the house would be "parted with," — "at a price" — and with "apparent reluctance"! Truth told, old Yorke was householder, collector, and dealer in one, not to mention dabbler in oils, which pursuit he followed upon an upper floor in a studio with a North exposure. His figure was a picturesque one as he descended the stairs in black velvet blouse, his head snowed by many winters, with an expression that seemed forever searching for the beautiful, and with features that took fire when the subject turned upon art in whatever form.

A CHIPPENDALE ROMANCE

"You are wise, Mr. Blake," he began, "in confining your collecting to the golden era of furniture production, in which the influence of Chippendale was paramount. He was the pioneer in the taste of his day, and it was to him that the group of cabinet-makers surrounding him looked for guidance and inspiration. His designs were the embodiment of form, symmetry, balance, and harmony."

"I am quite in accord with your views of his talents," I replied: "but how do you explain the supremacy he held in his field? Granting his constructive thought and unfailing eye for contour, what features of decoration do you consider he used most effectively?"

"His principal motifs were details from the orders, the acanthus leaf in infinitely varied forms, Gothic, rococo, the shell, modeled to life and in conventionalized running pattern, the scroll, volute, rope-edge, the fret, both open and applied in relief, cartouches, the heads, paws, and talons of birds and animals, and, in the choicest productions, mascarons bearing the human features. For the oak and walnut of Queen Anne and George I he substituted the warmer, richer mahogany, and with true mastery of technique applied to the cruder designs of those earlier days a lightness, grace, and ele-



CHINA TABLE

Chippendale style. The shaped top is bordered by an open fret railing, beneath which runs a rosette-and-ribbon band and a graceful shell border which outlines the lower member. Cabriole legs, their knees decorated with acanthus, spring from the corners in curves flowing structurally from the bed of the table. Volute feet resting on shells. The cross-bracing beneath is in the form of C scrolls supporting a large flower at the centre, with dripping-water effects. Originally gilt.

None but a master of his craft could have conceived and executed this superb example of Chippendale style, as affected by the potent Chinese influence of the day.

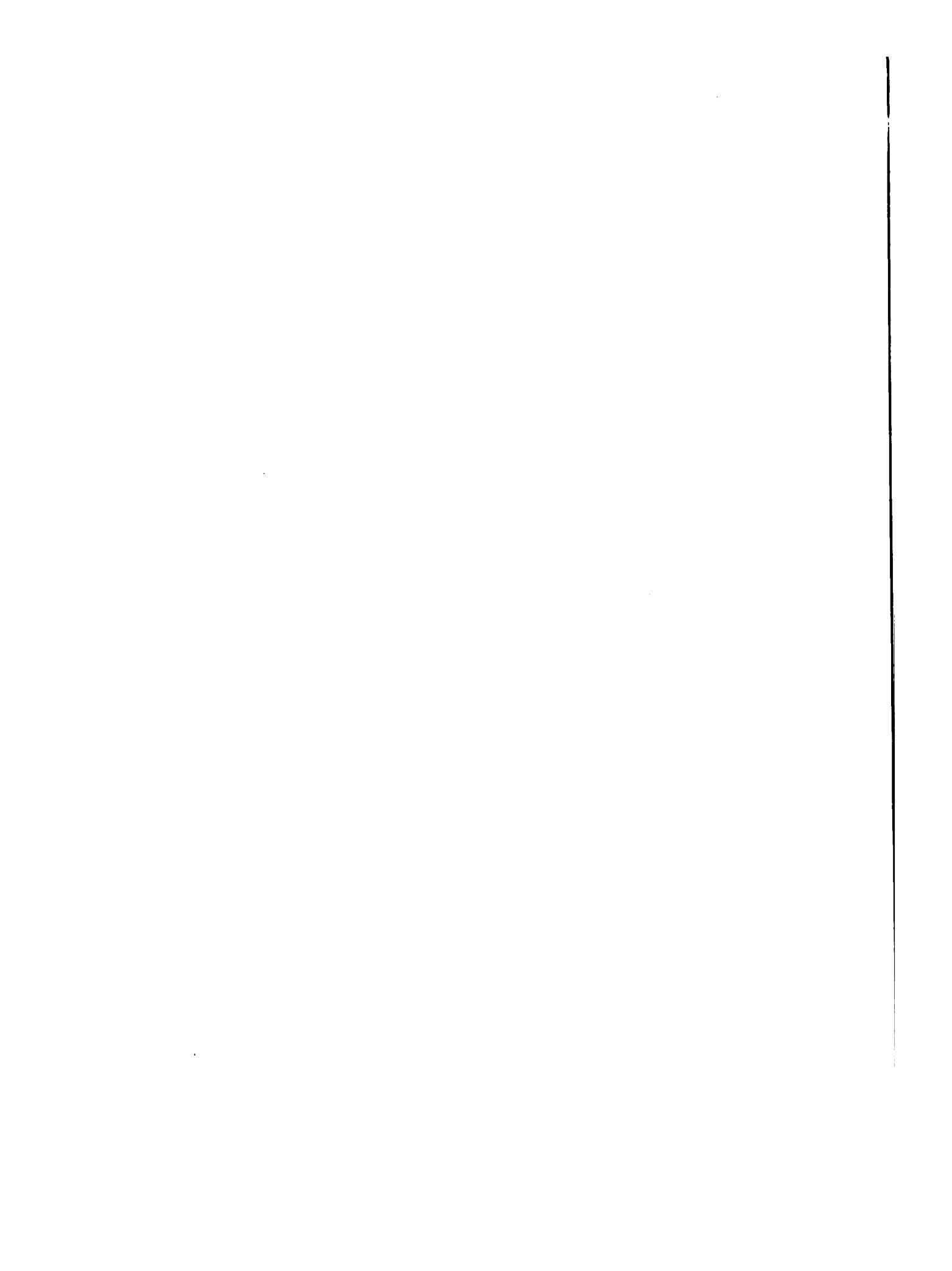


ROCOCO CHAIR

One of four. Chippendale style. The stiles are reeded and join the top rail with a spray of acanthus. The splat is of delicate modeling, in which the shape of the spaces properly had equal consideration with that of the design. The seat-rail is richly ornamented with a shell pattern, and the cabriole legs with flowers on a matted ground.

The feet consist of in-turning scrolls ornamented with acanthus.

A richly ornate chair, of Louis Seize influence, whose back might be viewed as being rather light for its body.



A CHIPPENDALE ROMANCE

gance which they had not hitherto known. Where Grin-
ling Gibbons largely confined his exquisite carvings in
soft lime-wood to panels and chimney-breasts, Chip-
pendale re-created them in miniature in his furniture.
Ah! Mr. Blake, there was an era when men designed in
rich and gay profusion for the pure love of their craft,
and when infinite pains and conscientious handiwork
were such potent factors in producing the repose which
modern, machine-made art must ever lack!"

"I am bound to admit that the influence of this
period was a vital one upon American Colonial furniture,
which was patterned after the English school existing
at the time," I rejoined.

"Yes; but like every copy following an original, the
merit of that original is never quite reached; which I
say without reflecting upon the quality of many superb
specimens of Colonial furniture it has been my good
fortune to view. But your Colonists at that time were
as a rule limited in their financial resources, with the
result that the bulk of your furniture of that day was
modeled upon plainer and severer lines than ours, and
as a rule lacked the fine sweep and exuberance of carving
characteristic of the Chippendale period."

"These facts are interesting and pertinent, Mr. Yorke,

A CHIPPENDALE ROMANCE

as throwing light on the origin and influences that created the school of Chippendale furniture, but have you considered the high artistic achievements that France was making at the same time under the contemporary régimes of Louis Quinze and Louis Seize? While Mortlake was producing the bulk of English tapestries, the immortal Gobelin, Boucher, and Aubusson were giving to the world their matchless weaves across the French border. Some of their finest work went into furniture-coverings decorated with designs in wreaths and garlands of flowers, and occasionally with scenes from *Æsop's Fables*. These tapestries, combined with the richly carved gilt rococo of the sofa, chair, *fauteuil*, *bergère* and *chaise-longue* of the period produced a sumptuous effect greatly prized by the connoisseur."

"Granted, Mr. Blake, that that class of furniture possesses the highest decorative value, and that its flamboyant style ideally suited it to the gilded salons of Versailles, where it formed an appropriate back-ground for the silk-clad courtiers and powdered and patched grandes dames of the day, I yet maintain that Chippendale, with its dignity, repose, and restraint, is the furniture to *live* with, — and why is not this after all the final test?"

We had been seated in Yorke's drawing-room and



TAPESTRIED CHAIR

Chippendale style. The stiles, decorated above with acanthus and pendants of husks curve into the top-rail in the form of a volute, which feature is repeated at each end of a broad band of acanthus leaves midway between, and still again where the splat joins the shoe of the seat. Mascarons of lions' heads, with rings from which hang garlands. The front legs finish in a lion's foot grasping a ball, and are attached to the seat-rail by brackets of scrolls and acanthus. Contemporary upholstering of Mortlake tapestry, held in place by the original tacks.

A somewhat severe, but rare, choice and dignified specimen of the Chippendale School.



PRE-CHIPPENDALE CHAIR

Showing strong Flemish influence. "Each end of the upper rail is carved as an eagle's head holding in its beak the flower-embossed stiles forming the sides of the chair-back. The central splat is modeled in the form of a convex cartouche narrowing at the sides into a band of drapery which is carried around the outside of the stiles and held in place by the talons of the same bird. Mascarons and a cupid's head adorn the seat-rail, and acanthus leaves follow the spring of the cabriole legs. [See page 139.]

A design of striking originality, evidencing creative genius and technical skill of the highest order.

A CHIPPENDALE ROMANCE

now rose to inspect his treasures in the adjoining apartments. My attention became at once riveted upon a chair of bold and original design, which I had never expected to see again, outside the collections of Remington and Chalmers. Each end of the upper rail was carved as an eagle's head, holding in its beak the flower-embossed stiles forming the sides of the chair-back. The central splat was modeled in the form of a convex cartouche narrowing at the sides into a band of drapery, which was carried around the outside of the stiles and held in place by the talons of the same bird. Mascarons and a cupid's head adorned the seat-rail, and acanthus leaves followed the spring of the cabriole legs.

"Why! This is one of the same set of chairs I have seen in two American collections!" I exclaimed; "the arm- and a few side-chairs in Chalmers'; and other side-chairs and the double-chair, or settee, in Remington's."

"That explains the final resting place of the settee," Yorke replied, with the joy of the genealogist who has discovered the missing link in a family tree,— "which I knew had gone somewhere in America. It was formerly owned in this city, where it stood in the Burlington Hotel and was acquired not many years ago by a New York importer through the offer of a fabulous sum,

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coupled with an agreement to replace it with a reproduction. But the modern artisan, clever though he was, failed to realize the subtlety of design in the central cartouche, which is modeled to throw the reflection of light upward, and by carving his copy in such a way as to produce the opposite effect, he lost the lightness and grace of the original. Another stumbling-block presented itself in the eagles' heads, whose fire and life are lacking in the replica."

"I lately saw one of the arm-chairs from the same set at Lincoln's Inn Fields, in the Sir John Soane Museum," I added.

"Quite true," Yorke replied, "and that specimen, with this, accounts for the full set of chairs,—of as remarkable and perfect a design as ever entered into furniture construction. In truth, you can make no possible mistake in grasping this opportunity to acquire an antique which is in a class by itself. The South Kensington and British Museums will never cease to regret the inadequacy of their present limited collections of Chippendale. Failing to realize its true value at the time when its moderate cost would have permitted them to gather together a representative exhibit, they have seen prices soar many fold until now they have not



TRIPLE CHAIR OR SETTEE

Chippendale style. A single strip forms the top rail of the three chair-backs, whose stiles are of bead moulding. The splats are formed of open strap-work scrolls and rosettes framing a latticed ribbon design. A pierced shell motif decorates the rail above each splat, carrying out further the effect of three separate chairs conjoined. Cabriole legs, their knees ornamented with cabochons and acanthus, finish in claw-and-ball feet. Silk damask upholstery, which is not contemporary.

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the means to acquire, even were it possible to secure at any figure, a sufficient number of fine examples. Why, the only full set of ribband-back-chairs, of which I have ever been able to learn as having come down intact from Chippendale, are held in a certain house in England — but no offer, however tempting, will induce the family to part with them."

"Have you abandoned the idea of ever securing the treasures?" I inquired.

"No; I am waiting for the owners to die," gravely responded Yorke, subordinating the mere question of life and death to the ruling passion strong in the collector.

"And should you then succeed, will you give me an option on the set?" I asked in the same spirit.

"I regret that the chairs are already under refusal, should they ever come into my hands."

"A dozen years ago," Yorke resumed, "we secured our highest prices from wealthy, discerning Americans, but since then we have been buying back whenever possible, at constantly advancing quotations, until now Christie's may be counted on to secure top values, as against any other market. Some of your largest buyers maintain agents in London who give their whole time to attending auctions, visiting the antiquity shops, travel-

A CHIPPENDALE ROMANCE

ing in the country, and keeping their principals advised of any choice piece that may from time to time become available. A curious instance of the zeal sometimes shown by these agents came to my notice not long ago. A certain old English manor house in a neighboring county was known to contain a number of important pieces of Chippendale, which up to the moment had been held intact from the advances of would-be buyers. Our friend, undismayed, sought out the gardener, cultivated him assiduously, and finally secured his permission to fish in a trout-stream which meandered through the place. A startled cry soon called the gardener to the spot, where the disciple of Walton had apparently lost his footing and lay drenched to the skin at the bottom of the brook. There naturally followed a visit to the house for a change of clothing, which furnished the needed opportunity to open furniture negotiations with the owner, to whom the agent made such flattering offers as enabled him to cable that day to his American principal that he had just secured several masterpieces!"

As Yorke finished his tale of the zealous hunter of heirlooms, my glance fell upon three blue-and-white porcelain jars, which rested upon the top of a near-by cabinet.



SMALL BOOKCASE

Chippendale style. Break-front cabinet with wings, the central compartment supporting a broken pediment, whose face is decorated with scrolls surrounding the richly carved plinth. A dentil band and relief fret run beneath. Glass doors in geometrical designs.

The lower compartment is enclosed by wooden doors, with shaped panels formed of bead mouldings with arabesque designs at each corner. A rope-band runs transversely above the lower doors and an egg-and-dart moulding below.

Blue-and-white porcelain jars on cornice [Page 149].



GEORGIAN MANTEL AND MIRROR

Mirror in Chippendale style, forming cover-design of this book. "Divided into panels with rock-decoration at its base, vines climbing around its upright lines, dripping-water effects across its top and surmounted by a pagoda with its inevitable tenant, a little Mandarin, who is being serenaded by a cavalier on the steps below." [Page 149.]

The cornice of the statuary marble mantel decorated with rich mouldings of acanthus and egg-and-dart. A lion's head in bold relief on central panel, the tail crossing the frieze diagonally and disappearing, only to reappear in the pilasters below the scroll-brackets supporting the cornice.

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“Mr. Yorke,” I cried enthusiastically, “have you noticed the harmonious effect of those two dissimilar materials in combination?”

“Indeed I have!” Yorke exclaimed, his features kindling. “They form a symbol of earth, sky and cloud, — the red-brown of the mahogany typifying the earth, the blue decoration of the porcelain the sky, and its white ground the clouds! Cabinet and china are joined in a union that should never be divorced!”

“Then there is that pair of mirrors beyond the door, whose sumptuous, flowing scrolls clearly indicate the contemporary Louis Seize influence, as well as the extreme to which the imagination of the English maker went in creating the design.”

“Might they not even be classed as *Baroque*?” I inquired.

“No; they did not reach the point of declining taste, — they are in no wise *surcharge*: see the incisive character of the carver’s stroke, and the life-like expression of the birds-of-paradise, which seem about to spring from their perches among the scrolls. For a somewhat severer taste, nothing could surpass in beauty or dignity this mantel-mirror, — divided into panels, with rock decoration at its base, vines climbing around its upright lines,

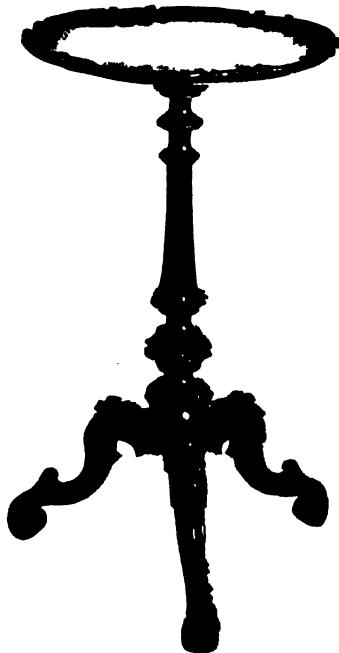
A CHIPPENDALE ROMANCE

dripping-water effects across its top and surmounted by a pagoda, in which you will see the inevitable tenant, a little Mandarin, who is being serenaded by a cavalier on the steps below.

Here my attention fell upon a Hawthorne-jar, which rested in opulent beauty in the centre of a tripod table, around whose circular top a running scroll-pattern was carved from the solid wood. The wild-prunus formed the theme of decoration for the porcelain, its white blossoms contrasting with a background of pulsating cobalt-blue.

“All your arguments in favor of Chippendale furniture are quite in accord with my own convictions,” I remarked, “but you have not given me your views upon porcelains, which, as you have made clear, are so closely related to fine mahogany furniture.”

“If my advice could be conveyed in a single phrase,” Yorke resumed, “I would urge your confining yourself largely to the incomparable productions of the Chinese, which, both in form and color, easily surpass all others. The collector need not fear monotony in this wide field, for he will never find two pieces alike, even in the case of pairs,—one or the other of which is sure to be larger or smaller than its mate, and to vary in some degree in color. Avoid nicks, cracks, repairs of all kinds, and,



SMALL TRIPOD TABLE

Chippendale style. Top encircled by raised scrolls. Column in form of sheaf. Cabriole legs in double C curves richly and incisively carved with roses and flowers in bold relief.

The work of a designer and carver of rare artistic skill.

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as a general thing, covers of any material foreign to that of the body of the vase, any one of which defects means a large falling off in value and desirability. Favor the shaped specimens, such as vases, jars, beakers, bottles, and the like, passing by plates, cups, and bowls, in which form is necessarily lacking."

"On that theory," I returned, "you would exclude seven-bordered plates, produced at a time when Chinese decoration reached its zenith; and also the fragile, dainty, egg-shell china and rice-bowls, in the body of whose paste incised patterns were often introduced with charming effect."

"They furnish exceptions to the general rule, Mr. Blake, but, other things being equal, if one-half of the effect depend upon decoration, then the other half must rely upon form. The most exquisite Chinese porcelain I have ever seen was a small peach-bloom amphora, of surpassing grace of line and charm of proportion. Had the same single-color decoration, beautiful though it was, been applied to a plate or bowl, the resulting value would have been nominal, as compared with that of the vase I refer to, examples of which are so rare that records are kept showing the ownership of the eight or nine authentic specimens known to exist. Among an infinite

A CHIPPENDALE ROMANCE

variety of colors that the Chinese have used in treating their porcelains, the victorious combination of blue-and-white has perhaps the greatest decorative value. But care and discrimination need to be exercised in the matter both of color and texture. Take the ginger-jar you were just admiring,— note the depth and translucence of the cobalt-blue, and the brilliant purity of the white ground. Were the blue of a paler hue or verging on purple, or were the paste of a muddy tinge, the vase would be 'off-color,' and its value seriously impaired. When, however, the coloring and glaze are right, the cover original and the whole jar flawless, there is almost no limit to the price it will fetch, as witness the late sale of a perfect specimen from the Huth collection for the sum of £5,900.

"Another combination of the same colors exists in the powdered blue vase, in moulding which the blue was blown through gauze, leaving reserves to be later decorated with other colors. A further product of this prolific K'ang-hi dynasty was the various 'families' of ceramics,— *famille verte*, *famille noire*, *famille rose* and *famille jaune*, which I have named in the order of their excellence. The examples of *famille verte* are especially to be desired, their body and glaze being faultless and their forms



GALLIPOT
Coral-glaze
monochrome
with rose.



GINGER-JAR
Blue-and-white,
showing *prunus*
flower and blossom.



JAR AND COVER
Powdered-blue with reserves.

TALL VASE
Five-color. K'ang-hi.

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irreproachable. Of almost equal merit is the *famille noire*, of which superb specimens exist in the form of jars, both round and square, and in the decoration of which the prunus-blossom and spray again charm the eye,— this time, in combination with deep, lustrous black."

The old gentleman here turned to admire a peach-bloom gallipot, from whose mouth, as befitted the design of its maker, blossomed forth a single rose, the Celestial who originally fashioned its narrow neck realizing that one blossom would produce an effect of unity, where a bouquet would but detract from the perfection of its lines.

I bade good-bye to Yorke, who wandered into an inner room still commanded by the hall, through which I loitered toward the entrance. Turning for a farewell view of the interior, I caught sight of the aged antiquarian on bended knees, with clasped hands upraised before a matchless Rembrandt, mumbling aves to the genius of the artist in a fervor of æsthetic exaltation. I softly closed the door, and left him to his meditations.

It was the after-dinner hour at Claridge's. Behind his palm enclosure, the leader of the orchestra, chosen

A CHIPPENDALE ROMANCE

equally with the *chef* from the Latin races, had completed his last impassioned solo of the evening. In the hall without, the pompous major-domo strode majestically, a fellow of magnificent stature, resplendent in ruby velvet and gold braid, bag-wig, silk fleshings, and silver-buckled shoes,— looking after the needs of his arriving and departing guests.

Within, I sat by a table enjoying my demi-tasse and a fragrant Havana, a silent and interested observer of the groups of distinguished men and women passing by and conversing in such diverse tongues, as to lead one to be uncertain for the moment whether he were in London or on the Continent. Further color was lent to this cosmopolitan atmosphere by the presence of a Turkish bey in fez and native costume, an Indian prince in be-jewelled turban and clothed in the rich stuffs of the Orient, a French marquis and marquise, a German potentate, and a peer from the House of Lords.

My favorite blend of Mocha and Java proved refreshing after a busy day with Yorke, and seemed to meet the French rule for ideal black coffee: “*Noir comme la nuit, chaud comme l'enfer, et douce que le baiser d'une jolie femme!*”

“Bah!” thought I, musing between puffs, “what do

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I know about that last comparison with pretty girl's kisses? A lone bachelor, self-banished from friends and kindred, bent on a mad chase for—something he can't find! *Cui bono?* Have I lost my sense of proportion? Am I not paying too dear a price in my worship of the beautiful? There are other beautiful things in the world. Aye, and youthful, too!—Miss Lee, for example! But why *Miss Lee?* Why not Rose?—the name is pretty and appropriate, in all conscience. She can't call me to account if I only *think* of her in that way! How she would have enjoyed seeing those exquisite things at Yorke's today, and how my own pleasure would have been enhanced in discussing them with her! I believe that in reality she is half won over to Chippendale, in spite of her stout advocacy of the later school. I wonder if that *hauteur* which she wears isn't all on the surface too, and whether the heart underneath isn't tender and sympathetic, if it could only be found. *¿Quién sabe?*"

Ah! well—on with the chase! Christie's tomorrow, where I hope to get a line on the ins and outs of old English silver, before beginning my collection in that field.

Christie's is *facile princeps* among the auction-rooms of the world. If, through an adverse turn of the wheel

A CHIPPENDALE ROMANCE

of fortune, or the continued drain of maintaining costly estates with an insufficient income, your impoverished lord finds he must crucify himself by parting with his family plate, his Chippendale, his Chinese porcelains, and his old masters; or my lady, because of similar untoward events, finds herself forced to turn her pearl necklace into coin of the realm, Christie's will inevitably bring the quickest relief. The prime requisites, however, which must first be possessed by every article before it may be even offered there, are quality and genuineness,—nothing of inferior merit or doubtful authenticity being able to pass the rigid censorship of the expert connoisseurs who make up the personnel of the firm. Slight defects and imperfections are pointed out upon their printed list of sales, so that the patron rightly feels he has quite the equal in protection as though he were buying of an established firm, who first owned and then guaranteed the quality of their offerings.

It was to these rooms that I made my way soon after arriving in London, to confer with one of the partners on old English silver. Upon him fell the task of correctly listing the many consignments of valuable plate that passed through his house, which, together with

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long and close study of the subject, had served especially to familiarize him with this branch of collecting.

"I come to you," I said, after introducing myself, "to get an impartial opinion on the comparative merits of the different periods of English plate, and to consider any suggestions you may have to offer in directing my efforts toward securing some of the finest examples of each."

In the smooth, deep tones of the cultivated English gentleman, the partner replied: "In considering old silver, Mr. Blake, we are dealing with a precious metal at once durable and beautiful — so, where collecting in other fields is, as a rule, confined to a couple of centuries, in silver we may go back several. Add to these advantages the English hall-mark, maker's mark, and date-letter, and we are in position to identify every example in our collection with the exact year in which it was made. Thus each piece furnishes a little history in itself! This is peculiar to English plate, our method of hall-marking surpassing in system and accuracy that of any other country; which of itself, apart from considerations of form and beauty, gives it a correspondingly higher value than any other silver."

"The fact that the word 'hall-mark' has gone into

A CHIPPENDALE ROMANCE

the vernacular as a synonym of purity and worth," I rejoined, "is of itself significant; but in just what way is its presence on old English plate deemed so vitally important?"

"Because," the partner explained, "its absence would denote that it had failed to comply with the Government regulation, under which every piece of silver claiming a certain fineness must be presented at one of the Assay Offices scattered throughout the United Kingdom, — there to receive the stamp of the Government attesting its quality and year of birth. With this hall-mark clearly in evidence, examples of the early reigns have sold with us as high as £300 for the ounce, while without it, the same pieces would be viewed merely as copies, and sell for the price of modern silver only, or say a few shillings an ounce. I recall an instance of one of your wealthy American collectors, with, I fear, more money than discretion, who ordered to be *gilded* a fine silver Queen Anne monteith, failing to realize that its value in the original state would be many fold greater than if plated, however heavily, with modern gold."

"He must have been related to another ambitious American whom I chance to know, who ordered erased



MONTEITH

Anne, 1702. Concave flutings,— pull-off corona — lions' heads and scroll handles.
Arms of Sir Philip Monnoux, Bart.

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the original coat-of-arms which so frequently adorns and gives character to old English plate, and substituted his own for it," I added. "My feeling that old furniture should be left in the condition in which we find it may be safely extended to old silver, may it not?—for as I view it, the two acts we have been discussing are little short of vandalism."

"I quite agree with you, Mr. Blake. As in other branches of collecting where value is materially enhanced by age, occasional instances arise of spurious antiquity in silver, and in spite of its being a state-prison offence, hall-marks are sometimes forged, and even genuine ones removed from pieces of lesser value to be braized into specimens of superior design, yet lacking in this all-essential endorsement of the Government. Such processes, however, always leave ear-marks readily discernible to the practised eye. The great bulk of old English plate that has come down to us was produced in the three centuries beginning with 1478,—just prior to the discovery of your continent, and the year in which the date-letter was adopted by our Government, although its hall-mark system antedated this by several hundred years. Among the primitive forms of these early days, the spoon, with its straight handle and pear-shaped

A CHIPPENDALE ROMANCE

bowl, is perhaps the favorite object of search of the modern collector."

"Upon what grounds?" I inquired.

"Because, as the sole dining utensil invented up to that time, it formed so important a part of the economy of life, a single spoon being the limit allowed each member of a well-to-do family; while, in accepting an invitation to share another's hospitality, it was *de rigueur* for the guest to bring his own spoon, which, at that early day, could be folded and carried in the pocket! Then," the partner's eye twinkled, "we come into the world needing a spoon, and are apt to go out in the same way; so it is logical that connoisseurs should find joy in collecting this little utensil throughout the reigns from Henry VII down to Queen Anne, when spoons, knives, two- and three-pronged forks, and other table-implements became general."

"But," I added, "you have not yet made clear what period you would commend as supplying the choicest English plate. Take a hypothetical case: suppose you were furnishing a Georgian house, what silver would you provide for the table, in order that it should be in keeping with its surroundings?"

"Nothing later than George III in any event,—thus



GILT CUP AND COVER

James II, 1688. Tapering body, with domed cover surmounted by knob in form of melon with ring.

Engraved with Royal Arms of England and A. R. (Anna Regina), the A still showing the first and last legs of W but imperfectly erased — evidencing its original ownership by William III.





TANKARD

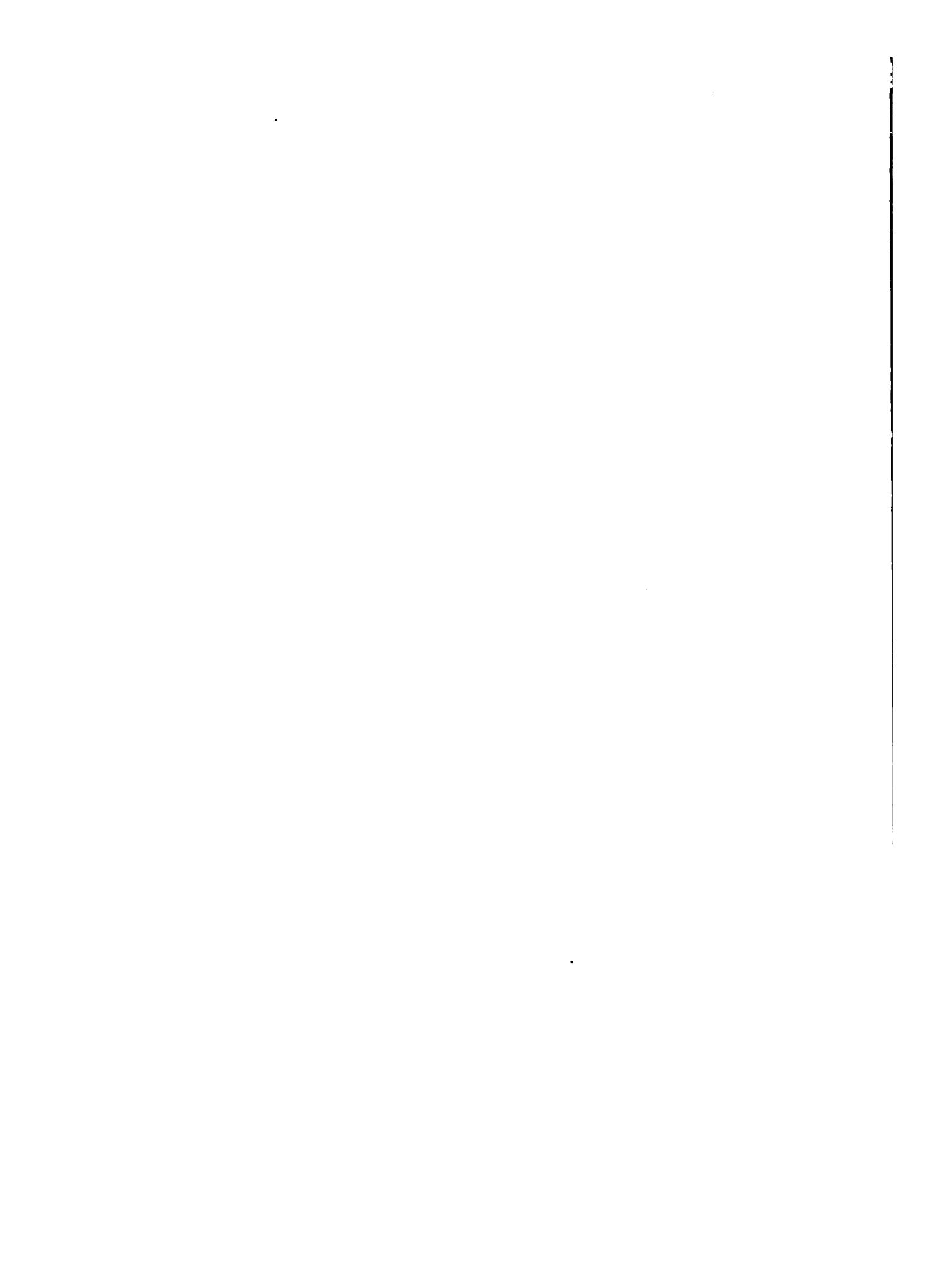
Charles II, 1678. Flat domed lid. Reeded moulding top and bottom. Ribbed handle and volute billet.

FLAGON

Charles II, 1677. Cylindrical with splayed foot. Arms of William Ogle, Duke of Newcastle.

TANKARD

Anne, 1703. Thumb-piece, lion couchant—the lower handle ending in shield crenelated at top.



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far your question is easy, but now I confess I am at a loss to know how to answer you further. So much depends upon taste, which in turn is so variable a quantity. Not many years ago, nothing later than XVII Century silver engaged the attention of our collectors; then George I came in for a share of favor, followed quickly by George II, while now George III and George IV are not without consideration, although the designs show a falling off in quality as the Victorian era is approached, just as they do in English furniture. Fully to appreciate the feeling and rarity of the archaic forms and generally crude chasing of the reigns of Elizabeth, James I, and James II, Charles I and Charles II, and the Commonwealth, demands a sixth sense on the part of the collector, which is developed only after long study and research, the hall-mark necessarily playing an important part in his final judgment. But the atmosphere imparted by the mazers, patens, tankards, tazzas, chalices, flagons, and loving-cups of those early days is unmistakable, and does not surround the productions of later periods. I recommend your being on the watch for such fine specimens to serve as decorative pieces. When it comes to your table, however, the Queen Anne, George I and George II periods will prove

A CHIPPENDALE ROMANCE

a prolific field. Especially in the latter reign, corresponding to the height of the Chippendale influence, the specimens produced were masterpieces of the silversmith's art,—imaginative in conception, pure in design, and ornate in chasing. It was at this time that Paul Lamerie came over from France and still further enriched the English silver of the period with his florid conceptions and elaborate execution. With all these desirable qualities present, I look to see a continually increasing demand for mid-XVIII Century English plate, while the older forms must still further advance in value in proportion to their age and rarity."

The month following this visit to Christie's, I passed in making pilgrimages to shire-towns and country-houses which promised opportunities in old furniture, silver, pictures, and porcelains, browsed among the shops in Old Bond Street, and secured some rare specimens at auctions, both in and outside of London.

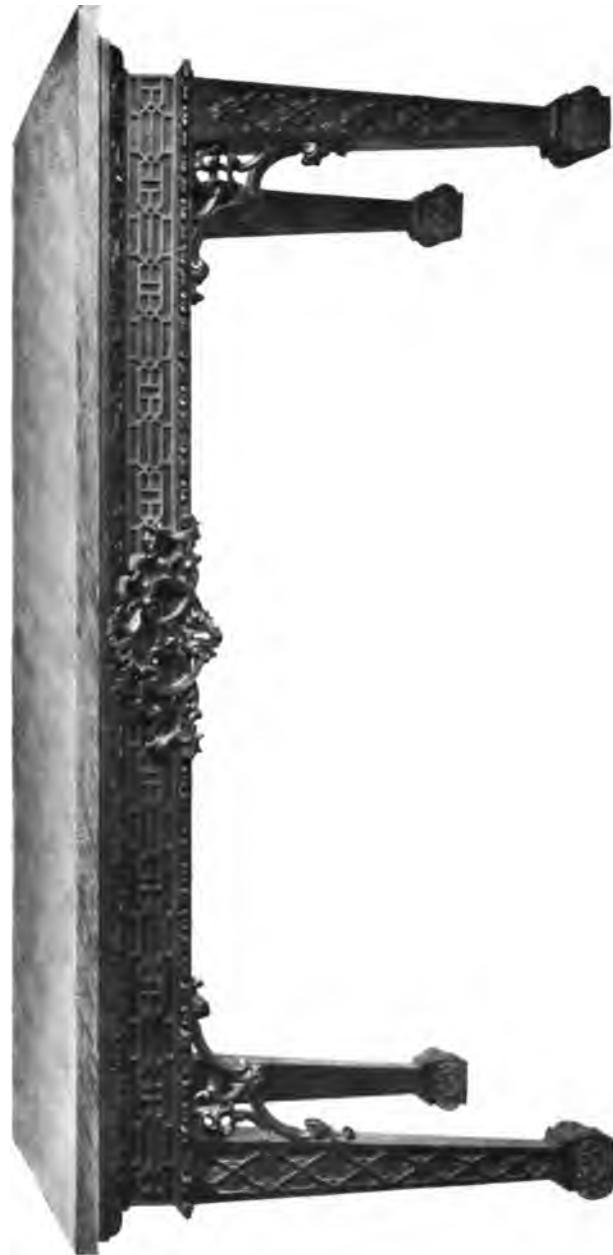
Every requirement of my exacting Georgian house had now been met, excepting always the bookcase and china-cabinet. Pieces of this character had turned up, to be sure, in the course of my wanderings, but never their equal in quality; and in order to maintain the standard I had set for myself, I preferred to return to



CUP AND COVER

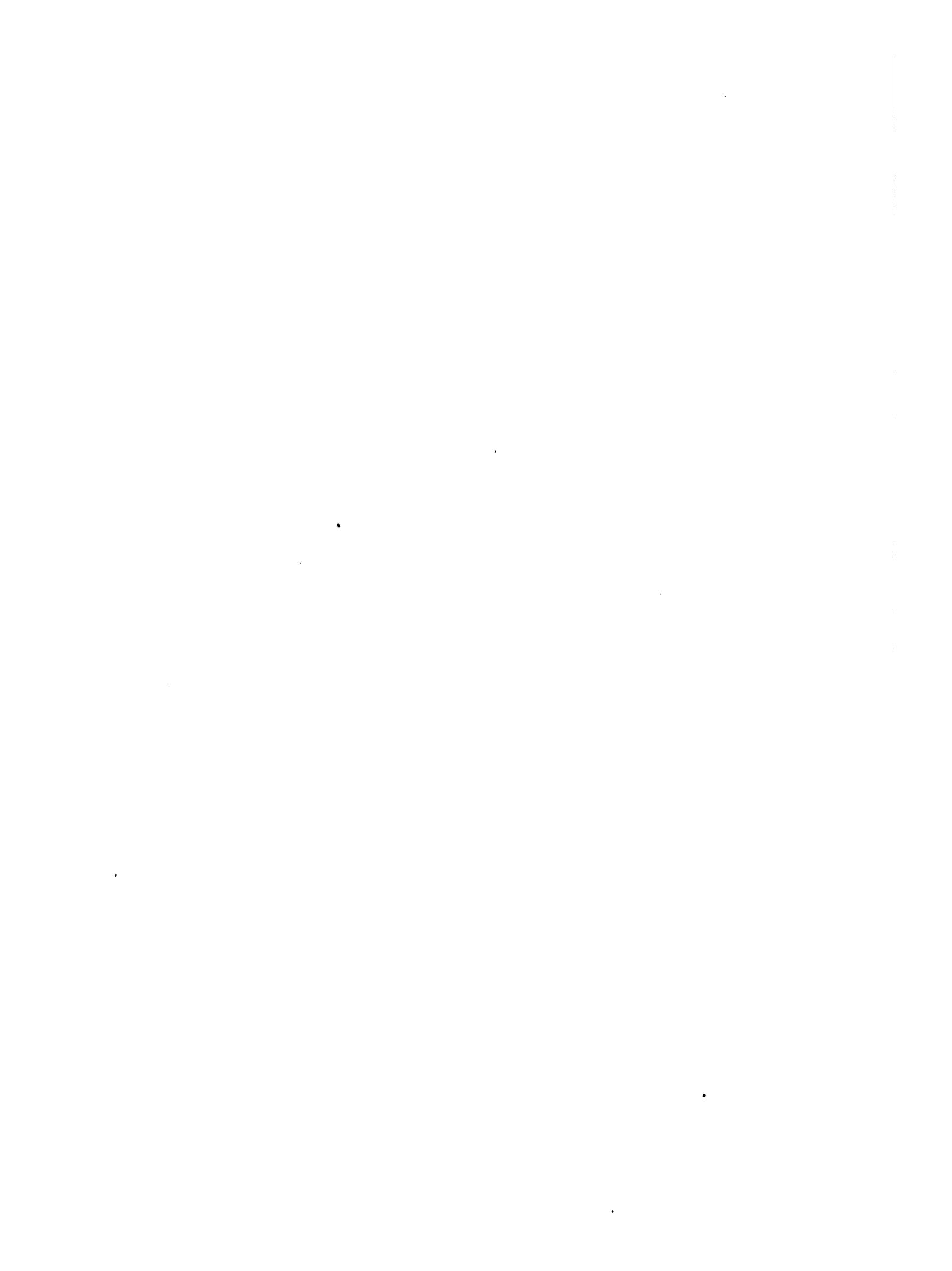
George I, 1723. Paul Lamerie, maker. A bold moulding divides the upper and lower halves of the cup. The decoration of the latter consists of arabesque straps in high relief on a matted ground, finishing alternately in a shell or mask. The domed cover has similar straps bearing masks. Hardwicke arms.

A typical example of Paul Lamerie's ornate workmanship.



HALL TABLE

One of pair. Chippendale style. The marble top rests upon a carved frame, along the centre of which runs a broad applied fret band of satinwood, contrasting with the mahogany beneath. A deep ovolo moulding in scrolls and flowers lies between this band and the marble top, and a rosette-and-ribbon band forms the lower border. Quadrilateral legs bracketed to the frame by an open arabesque in C curves and scrolls taper downward and end in a square block foot. A similar ornament, with an additional shell design, forms a pendant in the centre of the frieze. The front of the legs is decorated in a lozenge pattern with rosettes at the angles carved from the solid wood. Inscribed on the inner frame: 'To Hugo Meynell, Esq^r; at Bradley in Derbyshire. To be left at the Bull's Head Inn, Derby.' A sumptuous example, dating from about 1735.



A CHIPPENDALE ROMANCE

America and bide my time, rather than fill those important places with inferior specimens. My date of sailing was now but a few weeks off, yet I had not written Miss Lee. And she had invited me to keep her informed of my progress!

Blake, I soliloquized, you were a cad to answer her in effect that you would write when you found it convenient. You transgressed the first rule of making yourself agreeable when, instead of interesting yourself in what *she* had to say, you tried to force upon her what was uppermost in *your* mind. You should have realized that music means as much to her as old furniture does to yourself, and when it became evident that her heart was set upon discussing the divine art, you should have kept your Georgian house in the background.

How could I have been so obsessed with the mania for collecting as to treat any one in that fashion,—least of all, an attractive young woman who had shown an interest in my affairs? Who, but I, was to blame when she appeared cold and impersonal?

Barring the two trophies I had hoped to replace here, my English trip has been a success, and yet I have not found the zest I anticipated in gathering together all these antiques. Why? forsooth. Every acquisition in

A CHIPPENDALE ROMANCE

the old days meant real joy in the new possession, and the thought that I was one step nearer a complete collection. Why should not this hold good in Europe as well as in America?

Can it be that my real object in securing these treasures in England was to find favor in her eyes and to share her enthusiasm in the accomplishment? Whither does all this effort and planning tend? It is, after all, but a thought that I have conceived, a problem that I have set myself to solve,—only to become a slave in following its mandate, and then without hope of ever reaching the goal of perfection? Assuming, though, that my Georgian house may some day be as complete as worldly imperfections will permit, who is to its wield its destinies? Simply because I am an orphan, I can't make a recluse of myself and absorb its beauties selfishly and alone. What decorative feature that it could boast would compare with that of Rose herself? Is there aught other who would so fitly preside at the head of my table, or whose gracious presence would be an equal source of pride and delight?

Be that as it may, I will repair my neglect by writing this very day, and telling her all that I have accomplished.



GEORGIAN MARBLE MANTEL AND MIRROR

Mirror in Johnson style. The pilasters of the statuary marble mantel are surmounted by boys' heads, connecting with female mask at centre by garlands of fruits and flowers.

An artistic design in bold relief, yet of delicate execution.

The mirror, a field of furniture-art in which Johnson specialized, abounds in scrolls, birds-of-paradise and shell-designs, which are surveyed from above by a Mandarin beneath his pagoda.

In the richness of his mirror designs, Johnson is held by some connoisseurs to be without his peer, but opinions differ whether the merit of his exuberant fancy is not offset by the greater freedom and purity of line that characterize Chippendale's work in the same field.





DOUBLE CHAIR OR SETTEE

Chippendale style. A single strip, richly carved in acanthus, forms the upper rail of two chairs conjoined. The splats consist of strap bands in cyma and C curves framing a diaper design. The front cabriole legs have volute feet, and their knees are decorated with acanthus, which is again used on the brackets by which they are joined to the frame. The lower edge of latter is shaped in curves, with a group of scrolls centred beneath each splat, further carrying out the effect of separate chairs.

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This letter was received by Miss Lee a week later:

CLARIDGE'S, LONDON, June 10

MY DEAR MISS LEE:

The weeks have flown so fast since I arrived in the "tight little Isle," and the demands of my forthcoming Georgian house have been so exacting, that I hope they will plead my excuse for not writing until now.

"Why should I not accept his excuse?" she queried, half-petulantly. "It is the same one he has been making ever since I first met him, to account for his lack of interest in anything except his hobby."

England is a great store-house of all things you and I hold so dear,—which I find is equally the view of her dealers in antiques! In fact they hold them so dear that I have already made a big hole in my first remittance from Mexico! One soon comes to realize that the unit of value here is pounds, which word falls as glibly from the tongue of the dealer who knows you want the thing he is offering, and that its duplicate does not exist, as dollars do from the mouth of an American. Indeed the guinea-pig not infrequently turns up with his demand for an extra shilling to the pound, on top of the twenty!

A CHIPPENDALE ROMANCE

But, revenons à nos moutons! I have virtually emptied the house of one Yorke, an old collector-dealer here, of the bulk of his fine things. It was almost pathetic to see his regret at parting with them—not, as I had been wrongly informed, with “apparent reluctance” but with genuine sorrow, as though his precious heirlooms had thrown out tentacles around his heart and soul. The logic of Remington’s adage that “to see was to want to possess” was all that I could muster to justify my conscience in despoiling his beautiful home.

Ab! but the things are superb! Chippendale at his finest: mirrors in which the imagination of the designer ran riot, four-poster bedsteads with testers carved in such exquisite designs that I expect to lie awake for the sheer joy of studying them, a marvelous chair from the same set as those in Remington’s and Chalmers’ collections, which I have always envied them; together with a wealth of tables, chairs, tall clocks, fire-screens, bureaus, girandoles, torchères, and commodes that are positively a feast for the eye! Then I have secured statuary marble fire-places of the period for every important room on the lower floor, old red damask for the curtains, and garnitures of blue-and-white for the general decoration. As for porcelains, your eye for color will dance with delight, when you see my selection of monochromes,



POLE-SCREEN

Chippendale style. The screen is woven in Mortlake tapestry, with pearl-edge frame, which may be raised and lowered on central spindle. Cabriole legs with shell on knee and rat-claw feet grasping ball.

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including peach-blooms, sang-de-bœufs, mazarins, clair-de-lunes, lapis-lazulis, café au laits, and turquoise-blues,—not to mention powdered-blues, black bawibornes, and a ginger-jar in deepest, ultra-marine blue, with a transparent glaze that is a caress to the touch. These Chinese master-pieces will be held sacred to the decoration of the lower floor, while, for those above, the English feeling will be further assisted by some choice specimens of Crown Derby, Old Worcester, Chelsea, Plymouth, and Bow.

“What industry he is showing!— and what an ambitious plan he has launched! How I should like to see those lovely porcelains!”

In treating the dining-room, I plan to fill its panels with examples of the XVIII Century English portrait-painters, to whom the commissions would naturally have been given when my Georgian house was supposed to have been built. So fortunate have I been in securing representative examples of their work, that you may picture to yourself the effect of a gallery of beautiful women from the brushes of Sir Joshua Reynolds, Gainsborough, Romney, Raeburn, and Sir Thomas Lawrence. For the rooms above, I have secured mezzotints, engravings, and first-impressions

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after the same artists, which, if you will pardon my speaking commercially, command as high prices today as did the original paintings when first produced. There will be pastels for the remaining wall-spaces, as well as Morley's domestic scenes, and some interiors of Dendy Sadler.

“With all the enthusiasm he was wont to show when describing it, I hardly realized before how far-reaching is his scheme, or that he would be able to carry it out with such perfection of detail. An English master in every panel! How enchanting! To glance from a Reynolds with his superb composition and gemmy effects, to the piercing gaze and sound modeling of a Raeburn — then to the entrancing loveliness of a Gainsborough — or a pretty woman from Lawrence's easel — that would be a privilege indeed!”

For the dining-room sideboards, there will be several important pieces of silver conveying the mediæval feeling of the XVI and XVII Centuries, while the table will be fully equipped with the best examples of mid-XVIII Century plate. Think of the delight of breakfasting with rat-tail spoons, and dining with three-pronged forks and pistol-handled knives later the same day! A last word, while we are on



TAZZA

Gilt. Elizabeth, 1577. Shallow bowl, the stem embossed with geometric strap design on dotted ground. The foot bossed with cartouches and bunches of fruit, and its base stepped and bordered with an ovolo pattern.



SAINT SPOON

Partly gilt. 1488 London hall-mark. Maker's mark, sacred initials and cross. Flat hexagonal handle with inscription. Seal-top, surmounted by figure of St. Nicholas restoring life to the children.

Perhaps the only Saint spoon known to exist.



BARONIAL SALT

Gilt. Constructed in two bell-shaped cylindrical sections, one above the other, surmounted by spindle-crowned hollow globe, and supported on three balls. Chased in conventional flower designs and outlined above and below with concentric borders of similar pattern.

In use, the sections were separated, the upper being placed at "high table" and the lower among the general guests — giving rise to the expression — "Above — and below — the salt."

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old silver. What do you suppose I bought at Christie's yesterday? — A full set of thirteen Apostle spoons, including the Master, "whereof oon is gilt," as the inventory quaintly records, all hall-marked in 1629, and one of the only three complete sets known to exist. I then entered the lists with a Glasgow collector for the possession of a Saint spoon, unique in this field of collecting, and followed it up to £1000 before I would let him carry off the prize! But my turn came once more when there fell to me a choice piece of Elizabethan plate, a silver-gilt Baronial salt, in two sections, with the archaic chasing of the time. It was formerly the property of the Corporation of Boston, England — first called Botolphstown, after the Saxon St. Botolph, who erected a monastery there in 621, then changing to Bostonstow, and finally to Boston, from which our own New England city takes its name. It was not unusual for English towns and cities, as well as Colleges and Guilds thus to own choice specimens of early silver. The piece is hall-marked 1598, or some thirty years earlier than the departure for America of the Puritans, a number of whose leaders sailed from that town.

“Why! he is as discriminating in his taste for old silver, as for furniture, paintings, and porcelains! Where

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will it all end? He will have a veritable treasure-house! His letter is a fascinating chapter from the Old World — breathing antiquity in every line. How could I have presumed to limit his soaring ambition by asking a place in his thoughts for my own hopes and desires?"

But, alas! — you have noticed that my list of acquisitions contains no mention of either bookcase or china-cabinet, and will therefore read, I fear, like the play of Hamlet without the title-rôle. "I have sought, but I seek them vainly"! and seriously doubt whether the equal of these Museum pieces can ever be found. I am eager to return to America, and hope you have found time amid all your distractions to give a thought to the absent friend who has been ransacking the English antiquity markets on a hopeless quest.

What have you been singing of late? I remember most agreeably our chat upon music and the interesting extracts from Franck's inspired F Minor Quintet which you played for me on your spinet.

"Ah! he mentions my music! Then he has an interest in something else, after all!"

Have you added anything to your Adam Room? One



SIDE TABLE

One of pair. Adam style. Quadrilateral tapering legs, the upper half ornamented with pendants of husks, and ending in spade feet. Realistically carved rams' heads at corners, connected on face of frame by festoons of bell-flowers caught up by bow-knots of drapery. Grecian urn on panel in centre.

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of its most beautiful ornaments, to my mind, is a Hepplewhite table, with rams' heads above each leg. Should I be asking too much of you to gratify a whim of mine,—to place in its centre your coral-glaze gallipot that I have always so much admired, as a reminder of the one who suggested combining the two?

I am sailing in a fortnight, so if you feel like heaping coals of fire on my head, a line by return steamer would just reach

Your faithful friend

HAROLD BLAKE

She laid the letter in her lap as she finished it, full of the thoughts that it had inspired. Could it mean more than the words expressed?

“Ah! Harold!” she exclaimed at length, “it can’t be that — but what a future for some one to look forward to! Well” — she sighed, “at least I may enjoy it until I know.”

So her answer was soon on its way across the water:

FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, June 18th

DEAR MR. BLAKE:—

My congratulations on your success in bringing into actual life what at the outset seemed almost a fantasy!

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Your letter reads like a chapter from the Arabian Nights! Indeed, I see no reason why the feat of the genie, who made such light work of moving Aladdin's palace and setting it down at a distant point over night, is not to be fairly matched by yours, in causing to spring up in America a Georgian house that might have been peacefully reposing in some English ancestral estate nearly two centuries ago!

You have planned so well for having every detail in harmony, that I can conceive of only one thing to complete the picture, and that is a Georgian ball, with every guest in the costume of the period! Ah! what an ideal background for an assemblage of kings, queens, dukes, duchesses, lords and ladies—as though the tapestry figures in one of Gobelin's royal court scenes, tired of holding the same postures for centuries, had stepped forth into life to dance to the stately measures of XVIII Century English music, and to render homage to the host who had furnished such an appropriate setting for the glittering pageant!

Do not despair over the missing pieces. If it be true that "every thing comes to him that waits," it is doubly true of the collector. You have wrought wonders in securing the things you write me of, and one needs only to know you, to be certain that you have been wise in their choice.

I am finding my usual delight in the three great writers

A CHIPPENDALE ROMANCE

of German lieder, Schubert, Schumann, and Franz, and much to interest me in the later songs of Wolff and Tchaikovsky. Then Bach, in his Well-tempered Clavichord, of course, had an instrument like the spinet in mind, fitly to express his flow of pure musical thought. We will have another little musicale à deux when you return!

Have added some things to my Adam room that I want to show you, and have others in view that I would like to consult you about. Then, I can't wait to hear by word of mouth of all your experiences during these many weeks! You know my interest in all that affects you, and that you have the best wishes for your happiness, of

Your sincere friend

ROSE LEE

A quick passage from Liverpool, and I lost no time in seeking out her who was fast coming to fill my entire thoughts. Her letter seemed cordial enough, though friendly interest might not necessarily mean affection, nor did she intimate that she had followed my fancy of doing that which might serve to keep me in mind. But my fears were set at rest when, on being ushered into the hall, my glance through the half-open door revealed the table and gallipot in harmonious union, and, rising from

A CHIPPENDALE ROMANCE

the slender neck of the latter, a single Jacqueminot rose! Near by, my enraptured gaze beheld the object of all my hopes — in beauty of feature and color vieing with the neighboring flower whose name she bore. She was seated before her spinet in black velvet gown with Vandyke collar of point-lace, the late afternoon sun forming an aureole around her head, and gilding with its rays the ancient objects about her.

In tones of haunting beauty — the accompaniment lending its support in alternate high and low chords of harp-like sweetness — she sang to Rubinstein's setting: —

*Du bist wie eine Blume
So bold und schön und rein;
Ich schau dich an, und Webmuth
Schleicht mir in's Herz hinein.*

It was such a vision, thought I, watching her entranced, that Heine must have seen, to evoke those fitting words! Loath to break the spell of her music, yet urged forward by the ardor which it inspired, I hastened to her side.

“Ah! Miss Lee,” I exclaimed, “what joy to be greeted by your song upon my return! It is Heaven to

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be near you once more, and to breathe the same air that you breathe! My journey has taught me many things,—that collecting is not all of life, and that one may become so absorbed by the passion for gathering curios as to be blind to that for youth and beauty. But a new light has dawned upon me. Zealous as has been my quest of the antique, I have come to realize that the deeper motive of the search was to win your approval!"

"You know you already have that, Mr. Blake. I, too, should have been blind not to see and appreciate the taste, courage, and industry you have shown in carrying out a lofty conception, which must leave its lasting impress on the art-life of our day."

"Perhaps," I admitted, "yet how far from perfection it must always be! I have learned that the collector's goal can never be reached,—for there must always be some things beyond his power to attain."

"Patience, Mr. Blake! All may yet be as you wish."

"But this is not all. Absence from you, my dear Miss Lee, has brought home to me that my Georgian house is lacking in a prime essential which England is unable to supply,—a queen to preside over it! Ah!

A CHIPPENDALE ROMANCE

Rose! I would see you enthroned there! Upon you alone I would bestow it with all the treasures it contained, if, with the *clou* of the collection missing, you would still accept it! Darling, won't you be my châtelaine?"

"Harold," she replied, her dark eyes charged with deep feeling, "I can't answer you — until I first make a confession. It was *I* who bought the book-case and the cabinet, and" — she rose excitedly to unlock and throw open the door of an adjoining room — "there they have been ever since!"

I stood spell-bound with amazement, as the familiar lines, symmetrical proportions, and exquisite details of the two masterpieces once more greeted my sight.

"You, Rose?" — I exclaimed, beset with conflicting emotions.

"Yes, I, Harold — but before you condemn me, hear my defense! I cared for you almost from the first, and recognized in you my master, yet waited in vain for a response to my feelings. Only those of my sex can know what it is to feel that our affection is not returned. Piqued by your indifference, I determined (ah! how I have since regretted it!) to wound you in what I knew was *your* sensitive spot, and at the same time enlarge the

A CHIPPENDALE ROMANCE

scope of my collection. So I gave an unlimited order to my agent for the book-case.

“Then you came to my house, still cold and indifferent to me, but with no lack of warmth in praise of Chippendale. Indeed, so eloquently did you champion his cause, that, while my pride would not permit you to see it, you won me over to his superiority above all other designers, with the result that the collector in me asserted itself once more, and I purchased the china-cabinet against you. But, believe me, Harold, the possession of the masterpieces has brought me neither satisfaction nor enjoyment, for their beauties were poisoned by the thought that I had bought them away from you! When you sailed for Europe, you left behind a void that taught me there were other ambitions in life beside collecting—and that where the heart’s desires are unsatisfied, all else is hollow and purposeless! When, at length, your letter arrived, and I read between its lines that some day you might care for me, the sight of the antiques became so abhorrent that I locked them in that room and have not seen them since until now.” She lifted her moist eyes to mine and sobbed: “Harold, can you forgive me?”

“Forgive you, dearest?” I answered, moved by her

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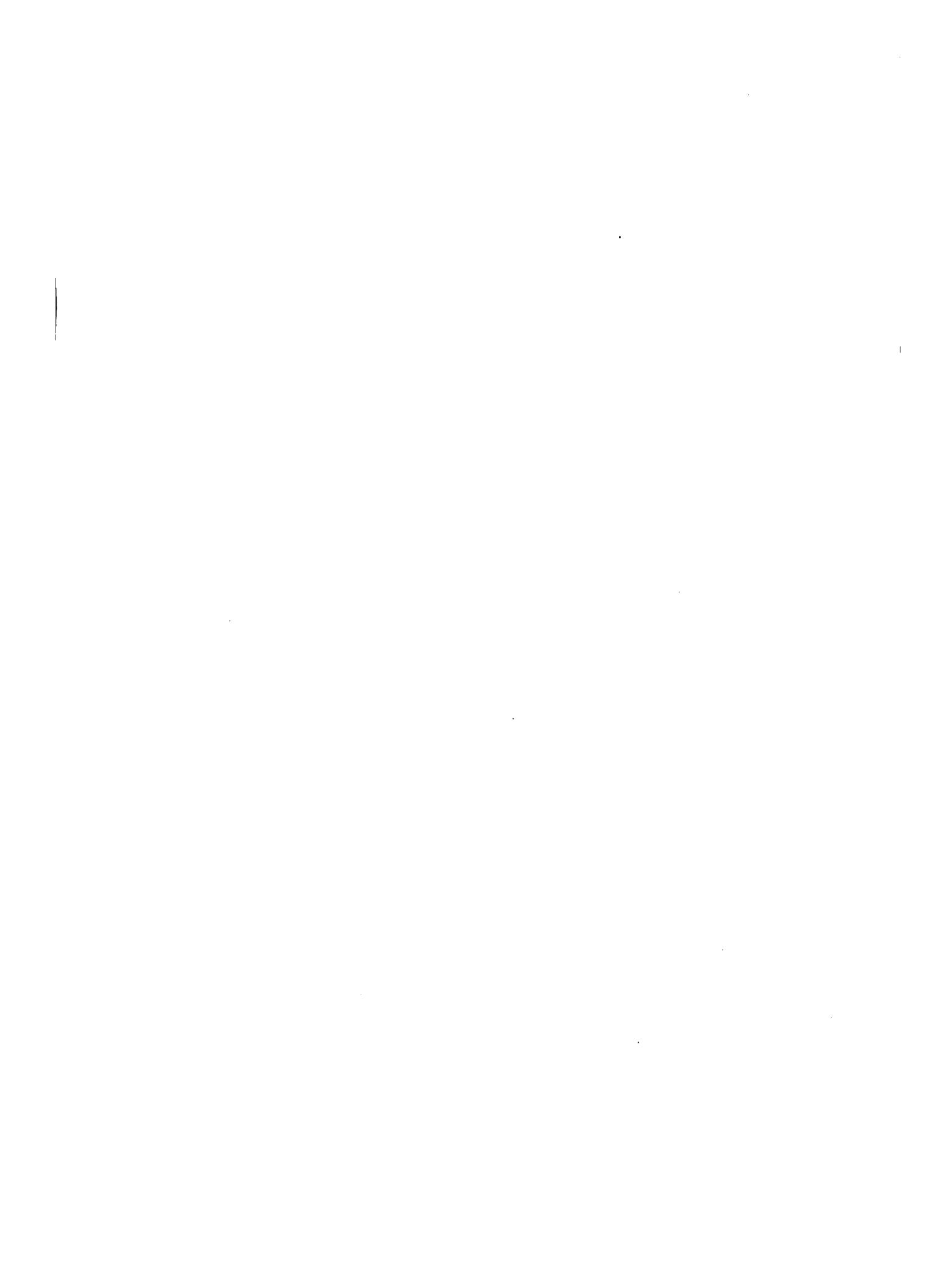
passionate appeal—"on one condition,—that you share my life with me henceforth!"

"But," Rose objected, her sense of artistic fitness still unsatisfied, yet smiling through her tears, "my furniture would scarcely harmonize with your scheme of decoration, especially with the bookcase and cabinet restored to their rightful places."

"Have no fear," I assured her, "we will provide in our plans for an Adam Room to contain all your treasures, and still be within the Georges! This will but add to the historic interest of our house, by showing the transition from one period to the other. But why give thought to the material things of life, where the heart is concerned? With that empty, the rest goes for naught! Ah! Rose," I exclaimed, clasping her hands and gazing into the depths of her eyes, "can't you see that, apart, our lives would be aimless, while joined together, the future will open to us boundless vistas of happiness?"

"Harold, dear," the words arose in gentle accents, her features eloquent in their tender appeal,—"I will walk with you, side by side, and hand in hand, whatever life may have in store for us—knowing that the happiness we have found in each other far transcends the joy we thought was ours, in gathering the things of this world about us!"

[THE END]



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